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MEMOIRS

OF

MR. JOHN TOBIN.

Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode,
Printers-Street, London.

MEMOIRS

OF

MR. JOHN TOBIN,

AUTHOR OF

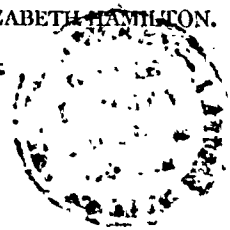
THE HONEY-MOON.

WITH

A SELECTION FROM HIS UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS.

By MISS BENGER,

AUTHOR OF MEMOIRS OF MRS. ELIZABETH HAMILTON.



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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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PREFACE.

SEVERAL years have elapsed since the comedy of *The Honey Moon* was announced for representation. Unsupported by fashionable patronage or literary connexion, it had to struggle with the inauspicious recollections of an unfortunate opera, which, under the same title, had been lately condemned on the same stage. Of the reputed author, little was known, but that he had long been an unsuccessful suitor at both the winter theatres: an equivocal circumstance, which, as candour or prejudice prevailed, might be quoted as an evidence of superior talent,

or of incorrigible presumption. The introduction of a new play is generally an event of sufficient interest to fill our capacious theatres; and on the 31st of January, 1805, the curtain rose to a numerous audience.

In the ordinary pains and pleasures of literary life, there is little to excite popular sympathy; but the situation of a dramatic author in presenting his first essay to the public, is such as awakens some degree of interest and curiosity in the most phlegmatic spectator. The enquiries respecting the author of *The Honey-moon* were, however, soon suspended, for the prologue announced the mournful truth, that he no longer existed, to deprecate censure, or exult in praise.

He, though your loftiest plaudits you should raise
He cannot thank you for the meed of praise.
Rapture he cannot feel, nor fear, nor shame;
Connected with his love of earthly fame,

He is no more.—Yet may his memory live
In all the bloom that early worth can give:
Should you applaud, 'twould check the flowing tear
Of those to whom his name and hopes are dear.
But should you an unfinish'd structure find,
As in its first and rudest forms design'd,
As yet not perfect from the glowing mind,
Then with a gentle voice your censure spread,
And spare the living — spare the sacred dead.*

In listening to these beautiful lines, an universal emotion of sympathy and regret was perceived in the audience; but how had their feelings of commiseration been heightened, could they have learned at the same moment, that the author, whose fate they deplored, had been condemned to a long and painful probation! and that *The Honey-moon* was but the last of fourteen dramatic productions, twelve of which he had himself offered—to be rejected.

* This elegant and appropriate little poem was written by Sir Humphrey Davy, who had lived in habits of intimacy with the author of *The Honey-moon*.

In the memoirs of literary men, little of variety or novelty is to be expected; but the singular fact already stated is without a parallel in the records of dramatic biography; and supposes in the dramatist a degree of fortitude, of patience, and perseverance, such as is commonly conceived to be incompatible with the poetical character. It will appear from the following pages, that the identical pieces, on which is founded his posthumous reputation, were in his lifetime dismissed with contempt; it will be seen with surprise, that no portion of that favour so liberally showered on his literary remains, was permitted to invigorate his hopes, or to inspirit his exertions; the praise that should have refreshed his fainting spirit, — the success that might have called forth its latent energies, — has but embalmed his memory, or cast a romantic halo around his untimely grave.

The perusal of the poet's memoirs will sufficiently explain the motives to which

the present volume owes its existence. Of the four dramas selected for publication, it is merely necessary to state, that two of them have been acted but not printed, and that the other two were not conceived to be eligible for representation. There still remain some minor pieces, which it may be hoped will, hereafter, take their trial on the stage.

The biographical part of this work is unquestionably that which most requires candour and indulgence. Whatever is mentioned respecting the poet's tastes, habits, and opinions, has been derived from those with whom he lived in the most unreserved intimacy and confidence, — from the associates of his childhood and the friends of his youth, — above all, from the conversation of his brother, the late Mr. James Tobin *, and the inspection of the private papers and manuscripts in the possession of

* The writer of these pages became acquainted with Mr. James Tobin the year after the poet's death.

his widow, on whom have now devolved the duties attached to the poet's representative.

Allowing for the obvious and unavoidable deficiencies of the narrative, it is, perhaps, not presumptuous to indulge the hope, that, to the lovers and well-wishers of the drama, the Life of John Tobin, however barren of events, may not be wholly without interest. As none of those disappointments he was doomed to experience could be traced to the operation of prejudice or malignity, it is reasonable to conclude, that the same causes which retarded *his* progress, may have for ever arrested the efforts of men not inferior in talent, but not equally endowed with fortitude and perseverance. This reflection more particularly demands attention at the present moment, when the degeneracy of dramatic talent is so often adduced as the sole cause of indifference or apathy for

our national theatre; but may it not be suspected that real genius has been sometimes compelled, by discouragement or neglect, to linger an unwilling exile from the first object of its literary enthusiasm and devotion, or even to renounce for ever that mimic world, to which, under happier circumstances, it might have added dominion, honour, and prosperity? It is too common to censure individuals for the faults of a whole community. Whatever may have been the mistakes of those to whom the interests of the stage have been committed, it is evident that they must have received their impulse from the public, which sanctions the dereliction of taste, by withholding support from real talent, and by an avowed preference of ephemeral to imperishable productions.

* Although the tragedy of *De Montfort* should never be restored to the stage, its introduction, so much to the honour of theatrical taste, ought not to be forgotten. In like manner we have lately seen *Richard the Second*, and *Timon of Athens* revived, only to attract transient

The theatre is the only CAPITOL in which our bards must look for the laurel crown, or receive the splendid triumph. The aspect of an assembled multitude, of whom the lowest, equally with the highest, asserts the privileges of sovereignty, is far more imposing than the magnificent pageantry by which the Tassos or Petrarchs of former ages were dazzled with the personifications of glory and immortality. No mitred chiefs — no sceptred potentates — ever bestowed honours so dear, so sacred, as the spontaneous suffrage of a liberal and enlightened audience. It should also be remembered, that with us the drama is of native growth — a self-sown species of poetry, which fixed its broad roots in the habits — the sympathies — the affections of the people. To suppose that this fairest product of the age of Elizabeth is already withering in hopeless though pre-

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homage, although both these characters were sustained by the genius of that great actor, who is confessedly a living illustration of Shakespeare.

mature decay, is to suppose not merely an alteration but a perversion of English character, than which nothing can be more dissonant to true English feeling!

It is earnestly to be wished that the simple but authentic statement of Tobin's difficulties and disappointments, may excite in some intelligent and powerful mind, an interest in the general character of our dramatic exhibitions, commensurate with the real dignity and importance of the subject. May it be the business of some able pen, not merely to trace to their latent source the causes of that alienation in the public from their once favourite pursuit, but to suggest feasible and efficient remedies for the growing evil. To the countrymen of Shakespeare it can never be an object of indifference, to preserve in a national theatre the *patrimony* of genius, for the protection of their cotemporaries, and the honour of posterity.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

MR. JOHN TOBIN.

JOHN TOBIN was born at Salisbury, the 26th of January 1770. His father was well connected, and by education prepared for a liberal profession, but that destination was afterwards altered; and on his marriage with Miss Webbe, the daughter of an opulent West Indian, his father surrendered to his possession an estate in the island of Nevis; and from that period he became ostensibly a planter. During the first years of this union he did

not renounce his residence in England, but settled with his young wife at Salisbury; and much of their time was spent with her father at Old Sarum, in the mansion still distinguished for having been the retreat of the great Lord Chatham, and the birth-place of William Pitt.

This village is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Avon, and from its vicinity to a city, offered peculiar facilities for the pleasures of society. During the winter season, festivity and hospitality prevailed through the neighbourhood, which was also occasionally enlivened by a company of players; and it was the most pleasing recollection of John Tobin's childhood, that he had been sometimes permitted to accompany his mother to the humble theatre at Salisbury; where he contributed not a little to the amusement of her party, by the uncontrolled expression of his rapturous delight.

At the commencement of the American war, Mr. Tobin, finding his personal superintendance necessary to the prosperity of his plantations, embarked with his wife for Nevis, leaving three sons, who were all of an age to be placed at school, under the protection of their maternal grandfather, and the tuition of Dr. Mant, long deservedly respected for the ability and success with which he conducted a classical seminary at Southampton. In separating from their parents the young Tobins lost not the comforts and privileges of home, since they regularly spent the vacations at Stratford, where they received a full share of paternal affection and indulgence. Mr. Webbe appears to have been a man of worth and sense, who, with quick generous feelings, was a shrewd observer of life and manners; and allowing for the prejudices of a West Indian, possessed a strong sense of justice and integrity: his pride was not vulgar; he despised the dissipated and the sordid, and

revolted from the language of sycophants and parasites: frank and high-spirited, he considered dissimulation as dishonesty, and strenuously enforced on his grandsons the sacred obligation to sincerity and truth. Ardent and tenacious in his opinions, he was apt to lose sight of moderation in the zeal with which he defended them: but it may be presumed they were maintained on conviction, since he scrupled not to dissent from his political party, or oppose the interests even of his relations, if they militated against his conscience.

From such a man it was scarcely possible not to have imbibed a high sense of honour and independence: but it might have been expected that the taste for luxury and expence exhibited in his munificent hospitality should have produced in his grandsons corresponding habits and propensities; yet the result was far otherwise; and whether the influence of example was counter-

acted by school discipline, or the elegant pursuits of literature, the Tobins became remarkable for their simple modes of life; their contempt of luxury, and indifference for those accidental distinctions of fortune to which vulgar minds attach immeasurable importance.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that Mr. Webbe's school was a bad preparation for a regular seminary. To be transported from that mansion of liberty, cheerfulness, and hospitality, to walls of academic strictness and seclusion, was some trial of juvenile fortitude: yet John Tobin readily accommodated himself to a change in situation which, to some of his companions, appeared intolerable. Ever disposed to receive pleasing and exhilarating impressions, he enjoyed to-day without regretting yesterday, or anticipating to-morrow. In a few hours the restraints of school were by him unfelt or disregarded. Such was the quickness of

his parts, that he outstripped all the boys of his own age; and such the sweetness of his disposition, that he was generally beloved even by those he had surpassed. No sooner was the grammatical exercise completed which composed his morning task, than he employed himself to correct the blunders or supply the deficiencies of his less forward companions; and happy they who, by sitting in the same class, had the good fortune to profit by his promptitude and kindness. To these superior attainments he appears not to have attached the least importance; and he was so perfectly unambitious of pre-eminence, that when it was proposed to act the play of Cato as a school exercise, he aspired to no higher part than that of Lucius.

The town of Southampton was annually visited by a company of players, and it was the reward of those scholars who had produced a superior Latin composition to

attend the little theatre. On these occasions the diligence of young Tobin was quickened at the expence of his equanimity; and such was his ardour, that it even betrayed him to expressions of impatience foreign to his character. With a passion for the drama so decided and invincible, it might have been expected, that, like many other juvenile amateurs, he should seek opportunities to distinguish himself as an actor; but this propensity, if it really existed, was completely counteracted by his aversion for active pursuits, and any thing like personal exhibition. Already devoted to the pleasures of the imagination, he relished not the exercises which disturbed the harmony of his thoughts, and forced him from his own aerial castle of indolence and meditation. During the vacations he was observed to take no interest in gardening, and to shew little ambition for the reputation of a keen sportsman: his favourite

recreation was angling, which he could pursue without effort and without interruption to his solitary musings.

It was on the rural banks of the Avon that he first attempted to reduce his desultory ideas to order and measure. There, apparently absorbed in the angler's indolent and almost passive amusement, he surrendered himself to the delightful impressions of beauty and harmony, which in cultivated minds are produced by the genial aspect of nature. Having taken his station in some squestered spot, whilst he inhaled the fresh air and enjoyed its stillness, he meditated, without withdrawing his attention from external objects, and often began and ended a song which was never committed to paper: to his brother alone was this clandestine indulgence acknowledged, for from him only did he look for sympathy and encouragement.

From the days of Ben Jonson* to the present hour, we shall find the opulent citizen and substantial landholder among the inveterate enemies of those literary pursuits which lead not to the attainment of fortune: and poetry has been so rarely the associate of wealth and prosperity, that it appears to be often held synonimous with profligacy and penury.—It is not to be supposed that Mr. Webbe or his friends were superior to this common prejudice; and it was, perhaps, from the consciousness of their sentiments on this subject, that young Tobin acquired a shyness and caution, with regard to his literary compositions, which invariably attended him through succeeding life.

Myself was once a student, and, indeed,
Fed with the self-same humour he is now,
Dreaming on nought but idle poetry,
That fruitless and unprofitable art;
Good unto none, but least to the professor.

Every Man in his Humour.

The termination of the American war at length permitted Mr. and Mrs. Tobin to return to England, and to reunite the divided branches of their now numerous family, of which the elder and younger must have been strangers to each other. Mr. Tobin having engaged in mercantile concerns, finally settled at Bristol, where John and James had once more the happiness of being restored to the paternal roof; nor was their grandfather deserted by his pupils, since he quitted Stratford, and established himself at Redland, near Bristol, where he enjoyed an uninterrupted intercourse with his daughter's family, and to the last moments of his life, distinguished with peculiar affection the boys who had been so often the companions of his rural walks, and the partners of his Christmas festivities. This happy reunion was, however, but the prelude to future separation: the three eldest sons were rapidly advancing to

maturity, and it became necessary to allot to each his respective part in life. James had long been destined for the church; for John it was not easy to discover a suitable vocation. Yet, misled by his sedentary habits and apparently unambitious temper, his friends conceived him to be exactly fitted for a solicitor's office. Not immediately however to divorce him from the superior objects of a liberal education, he was placed under the care of Dr. Lee, master of the grammar-school of Bristol, and encouraged to extend his acquaintance with modern literature.—Associated in their daily studies and recreations, assimilating in tastes, sentiments, and opinions, James and John Tobin insensibly contracted a friendship, such as is rarely found to exist in the most intimate relations of domestic life. A community of interests seemed established between them; and in a family distinguished by harmony and affection, they

stood pledged to each other for a still more exclusive fraternal attachment.

It was not merely in the society of his fellow student and his tutor, that the younger Tobin had opportunities of enjoying cultivated society. His father, who had received an education such as is rarely bestowed on a West Indian merchant, still devoted his leisure hours to the British Classics; and without suspecting he had a son who aspired to dramatic fame, unconsciously cherished the passion he had even in childhood conceived for dramatic poetry. From his father also the young Tobin imbibed an enthusiastic admiration for Pope and Dryden; but at the same time unluckily acquired a relish for satire, which often blights the youthful mind, to which it lends the semblance of maturity, and throws an ungenial chill over the poetical imagination.

At the expiration of that year, which various circumstances conspired to render the happiest of his life, young Tobin quitted Bristol, to be articled to an eminent solicitor in Lincoln's Inn; he had just attained his seventeenth year, and it required all his constitutional philosophy to support without murmurs, the transition from his father's house and his master's study—the attractions of elegant society—and the charms of beautiful scenery—for the drudgery of an office—the noise—the bustle—the heartless insulation of a vast and to him unknown capital; there was however some alleviation to this trial, since he was domesticated in a highly respectable family, whose kindness appears to have soon reconciled him to the change of situation; and in his native sweetness of temper, he possessed an universal passport to good-will and affection. With this extreme facility of character, he was fortunate in being placed with friends, who insensibly

acquired an undisputed right to regulate his habits and guard his inexperience. During the first six months, all intellectual pursuits were precluded by the daily duties of the office, and when released from his desk, he was happy to embrace whatever relaxation his kind hosts proposed; and with the society of a few friends, or the perusal of some ephemeral publication, he commonly closed the day, of which two thirds had been given to an irksome occupation. During some months he appears to have resolved to attach himself to his profession, for which, according to the following letter, addressed to an old schoolfellow, he at that time rather felt indifference than aversion.

"My present situation upon the whole is pleasing, notwithstanding the perseverance that is necessary to support ten hours of constant daily attention to a business which I do not yet thoroughly understand; a bu-

siness which, though subject to the greatest abuse, requires more attention than almost any other. I find the city of London very dull; it however improves upon me. My acquaintance is but thin as yet: of that number however —— is one, as an acquaintance only; for I do not by any means look on him in the light of a friend. I agree with you that he is a complete buck, and with your permission a true coffee-house lounger.

"I generally go to the theatre once or twice a week at half-price. I have therefore an opportunity of seeing most of the new farces, and some of the new plays, which (though I do not pretend to the talent of criticism) I think are for the most part very bad.

"I have been once or twice to the disputing clubs, where I have met with two or three good speakers. I suppose James furnishes you with Bristol news. I think his situation there a very comfortable one;

indeed I have no reason to complain of my own.

"I begin to enter by degrees into the spirit of my business, and though I meet with a great deal of what Shakespeare calls the insolence of office, I console myself with the reflection, that it is impossible to arrive at knowledge in any profession, without being in some measure a slave to it. The office I am in abounds with business, sufficient to keep ten of us constantly employed."

"Friday, September.

"In spite of the mutual promises we made, our correspondence has already begun to droop. I believe I can explain this matter better than you. By a letter of yours to ——— (whom I saw on Sunday last), I understand you were in daily expectation of receiving an answer to your last, which I was surprised to find you had not; as I not only wrote you a very long one, but

put it myself into the hands of the postman who comes round. I shall now proceed without any ceremony, to acquaint you with all the news I know. I expect Jim in town every day; he is going to spend some time with a gentleman at Kingston. I have some thoughts of returning with him to Bristol. I assure you I must admire the old thesis of *dulce est desipere in loco*, and hope to unbend my bow very soon, and to keep him very loose great part of this present long vacation. Pray, how do you go on with regard to clerk's fees? We have very few. I am at present laid up with a slight fever and sore throat, or else perhaps you would have had an intelligible and legible letter; it arises from a cold, and *serò medicina paratur cum mala per longas invaluere moras.* I have not much considered since I left school, but I must now lay down my pen to take a dose —of what? faith, I know no better than you; suffice it to say, it is a dose of apothecary's

stuff. To proceed, pray do you hold any communication at present with Homer and Virgil? I assure you I often regret that I have no time to improve the little knowledge that I already have of those authors; for, as to the rest, I look upon them merely as understrappers; or, to give you a home simile, they are no more to be compared to Homer or Virgil (Horace excepted), than a poor attorney's clerk is to the lord high chancellor of Great Britain. My head begins to swim; indeed, from my letter, I am afraid you will think it was rather light when I began. As this is the case, I shall conclude with my old friend's adage; *sit mihi mens sana in corpore sano.*"

From these extracts it might be suspected that the writer already directed his thoughts to the stage. In the tone of his strictures he evidently discovers something of the spirit of the author by anticipation, who is roused to exertion by the

perception of errors he hopes to avoid, or provoked to competition by the feeble though successful efforts he expects to surpass. Our poet, like many juvenile students, appears to have been almost an exclusionist in his literary predilections; and whilst he cherished Pope and Dryden with ardour, he was but little sensible to the beauties of Thomson and Cowper. In comedy his *beau ideal* was formed on Sheridan and Congreve: in riper years, although he continued to admire those great masters, he reserved his profounder homage for Shakespeare and Nature. Nor was it only on literary subjects that he learned to distrust the accuracy of his first impressions; he ceased to anticipate with complacency his future advancement in a profession in which he discovered nothing to satisfy the mind or interest the heart; externally, however, he was diligent and active in the details of business; he regularly attended the courts, but his spirit went not

with him, and indifference was gradually converted into repugnance; yet he allowed himself no voluntary neglect; and in the office surpassed every other clerk in the celerity and correctness of his transcripts; but as he had the faculty of abstracting his thoughts from the parchment submitted to his pen, he perpetually digressed to ideas unconnected with business, and by this mental evasion completely frustrated the object for which he had been placed in a solicitor's office. Unfortunately, the sacrifice of his worldly interests was without advantage to his literary pursuits. So many hours were consumed in a superficial devotion to business, that no leisure remained for any regular plan of study, or enlarged views of mental improvement. Left to himself, he contracted a taste for desultory reading. His early predilection for satire was confirmed by the conversation of professional associates; and thus was he led to waste his time and

talents in ungraceful efforts to lash the vices and follies of the age. To this circumstance must it be imputed that during the first years of his residence in London he produced so little poetry worthy even of his juvenile pen. To those who desire to trace the germs of literary talent, the following verses, composed in or before 1788, may be acceptable.

Epitaph on Maria P——.

A prey to grief and pain no more,
Maria sleeps beneath this tomb,
Whose virtue could no higher soar,
Whose beauty could no sweeter bloom.

Heaven viewed with care its darling pride,
Too spotless for a world like this;
Left her awhile to sweeten here,
Then snatch'd her for the realm of bliss.

At morn, in pride of youth, she shone,
So shines the dew-drop on the rose;
At eve, she withered, pale and wan,
So sinks the dew-drop to repose,

To Miss ——— on her Birth-day.

To hail this bright auspicious day,
Accept, dear girl, the votive lay,
Which merit such as thine requires,
Which beauty prompts, and love inspires.
Nor would I bend at flattery's shrine,
For beauty exquisite as thine,
Or praise the lustre of thine eye,
Unless it beam'd with modesty:
Or paint the cheek's luxurious bloom,
Sweet as the lilly's sweet perfume,
Unless soft pity's trickling tear
Was often known to harbour there.
Beauty's a meteor's short-lived blaze,
That sinks unheeded while we gaze,
And void of merit ill can claim
That praise which vicious deeds would shame:
Oh! may each circling year like this,
Be pregnant with some future bliss;—
Still find thee young—still hail thee fair,
Nor rack'd with pain—nor craz'd with care.
And when the cank'ring hand of time
Shall feed remorseless on thy prime—
When from thy cheeks the roses fly,
When fades the lustre of thine eye;
Oh! may each year, that steals a grace,
Implant a virtue in its place;
And when the shell no longer blooms,
Enrich the gem which it entombs.

The following extract from a cotemporaneous poem is in a better strain, and exhibits the rudiments of the author's dramatic blank verse. The hero of this piece is an unfortunate man who languishes in prison by the fiat of a remorseless creditor. After an exordium, in which he feelingly reproves the careless sons of luxury, he thus apostrophizes the author of his calamity.

And thou, presumptuous wretch! whose iron soul
Has bound these fetters round my aged limbs,
And laid thy gripe where misery's pressing load
Sore gall'd before; what urg'd thy daring hand
To cramp a spirit freeborn as thy own?
A soul that bears the image of thy God,
Passions that rise as high, and cry as loud
For quick enjoyment: — appetites as keen,
And hopes as daring; — an ear as finely form'd
To catch the mingled melody of sound
From harmony's full choir; — an eye as keen
To drink from beauty's glance the ray of hope,
Or skim o'er nature's variegated hues,
Till fancy surfeits on the fairy scene
Herself has drawn. Thinkest thou yon bed of sweets
Sheds not as sweet a perfume to my sense
As e'er it did to thine; or that yon board,
With daintiest viands spread, with equal zest
Regales not him that murmurs in this cell?

Yon shiv'ring wretch,
That wears the ragged livery of woe,
On whose wan cheek black melancholy sits
To steal the rose away, and sable o'er
The lilly's sick'ning bloom, whose famish'd sense
Feeds on the superfluities of pride,
And luxury's scant gleanings, oft withheld
From wantonness of waste — ask thou of her,
For she has chronicled each hour of woe,
When wildest raged the storm, and the rude wind
Has loudest roar'd with desolating sweep;
And she will point to yonder rifted tower,
Beneath whose brow she brav'd the batt'ring storm,
That shrunk with hideous crush the crumbling pile;
Ask thou of her, where sorrow saddest reigns,
And she will tell thee of some church-yard's gloom,
Where oft, in concert with the drizzling dew,
At night's sad hour she shed the idle tear
On some rude stone, and envied the cold dust
That slept beneath. Yet she's a queen to me.
The tempest past, her eye can wander o'er
All nature's chequer'd tints and blooming hues,
Mingled in sweet confusion; and when the sun
Gilds her wan cheek, drinking the falling tear,
And flings a warm beam thro' her tatter'd cloak,
Smiles, such as glimmer thro' a wintry cloud,
Illume her hollow cheek, as the pale lamp
Lightens the gloomy aspect of the tomb.

And thou, fair village, erst my fond retreat,
When hope spun fair her glitt'ring web of joy
In fancy's loom, to cheat the roving eye

Of inexperienc'd youth, whose sweets among
I've stray'd so oft, and trod thy broider'd vales
E'er chanticleer, shrill herald of the morn,
Had hail'd the blushing east with neck outstretch'd,
And crest high flaming, or the soaring lark,
Borne on the buoyant bosom of the air,
High quiv'ring caroll'd loud her matin song;
E'er yet the sun had shot his infant beam
To chase the vapour from the mountain's brow;
While yet the dew-drop glitter'd on the thorn,
And silver'd o'er the mead, untouch'd, as yet,
By ruddy Phœbus, or the heavy tread
Of new-wak'd villager, or daintier step
Of milk-maid lightly tripping o'er the path
Of yonder church-yard, where she stopp'd awhile
To ask the sexton, busy at his work,
Whose was the new-made grave? and then began
In rustic mood, to moralize awhile
On what the parson said, that all must die;
And ruminate how oft the bell had toll'd
Since she remember'd. Oh! it joy'd my soul
To see the big tear start into her eye,
And bathe the honest glow upon her cheek,
To think how death had thinn'd the village tribe.
Perhaps for me, (sad meed of sympathy),
She since has wasted many an idle tear,
Who oft have met her near my custom'd oak,
And stayed her speed, while from the briar'd copse
The motley thrush chided the gurgling rill
That marr'd her melody; and well I ween
The aged pilgrim who, with look devout,
And eye uplifted, greeting all that past,

Sat at my gate, has missed his custom'd meal:
Perchance he has not found an ear so prompt
To listen to his long-drawn tale of woe —
An eye so apt to weep when it is done.
Unpract'is'd he to whine his woes aloud,
(Grief's clam'rous harbinger), and if perchance,
Nor the big care that sat upon his brow,
Or sorrow's trace, that mark'd his furrow'd cheek,
Could wrench from avarice the niggard boon,
He shook his silver'd beard, and murmur'd not;
Or if he murmur'd, 'twas but with a smile,
A smile that, whilst it chid, forgave the wrong.*

It would be frivolous, if not invidious to multiply specimens of his juvenile compositions, which can only interest as they mark the gradual developement of talents, and are merely useful as they check the rigour with which literary censors sometimes scan the pretensions of youthful writers. There are few authors who have not become sensible to the aukwardness of their first attempts, or who have not to lament the time consumed in unprofitable

* It will be seen that this line was afterwards transferred to his tragedy.

experiments to elicit latent genius; and often has humiliation been the vigil of triumph, and self-reproach the earnest of excellence.

At this period it is probable that Mr. James Tobin might have challenged precedence of his brother in poetry. Before he quitted Oxford he had proposed to publish, in conjunction with John, a small volume of poems; but criticism appears to have spoilt him for an author: he had at least learned to judge his own productions with rigour; and the scheme was finally relinquished.* During an excursion which he afterwards made to the continent, he was vainly stimulated to literary enterprize by his adventurous brother, who in the meantime had finished a satire of 500 lines, which was not destined to reach the press.

* Many of these pieces afterwards appeared in the Anthology which was published in 1800.

The following letter, addressed to Mr. James Tobin, claims insertion, as it contains the political tenets to which the poet adhered through life. The mildness and liberality of his character were ill suited to the turbulence of faction, or the exclusiveness of party; and he was therefore usually left alone to maintain the single-minded independence of his principles.

" London, December, 1792.

" The most current report here is, that Mr. Pitt is privately negociating with the French, to whose cause, during the inglorious crusade of kings and emperors, I wished well; but now that they are proceeding to invade the peace of countries which have avowed no hostility to theirs, I must freely own I feel the same sort of disgust at their conduct, as that which possessed my mind on seeing their own country invaded by a league of despots. Admitting the goodness of their motive, that of giving

universal liberty to mankind, they can have no right, either natural or political, to inculcate any doctrines by force. The *argumentum baculinum* never produced conviction; and the wars which deluge kingdoms with blood to establish an opinion, never yet gained a single proselyte: so far from it, that I firmly think nothing can root a persuasion of the mind so strongly as persecution. It is for this reason I lament the present growing system of mental tyranny in my own country; that horrible inquisition over the mind of man — that controul upon his most noble, his rational faculties — that embargo upon words and phrases which is lately established, and which resembles the argument of Peter in the Tale of a Tub, who, to convince his brothers that a peck loaf is a shoulder of mutton, says, —"I shall use but one plain argument, which is, "By G —! if it is not as good mutton as any in Leadenhall market!" —Now, though such an argument, naturally

enough, did not convince the brothers of their mistake, yet, like the present system of colonelling, (as if you could turn a man's brains in a vice) it made them bold: and such, I am afraid, is the object of the present swell and commotion: for I am convinced the *Grumbletonians* are not many; and what signifies stopping a man's mouth if his eyes are to remain open? Indeed I think, on every consideration, this muzzling system a very bad one; for till people are born without reasoning faculties, or, having them, till you have found out a method of giving the *coup de grace* to the powers of thinking, men will ruminate; and if their thoughts are inflammatory, to prevent their being violent, you should allow them a vent. I would say much more on this subject, if I could hear any argument advanced why a man should not speak his thoughts; and I think still no man will ever suffer in this country for delivering his sentiments in decent and sober language.

Having no news to communicate, I could be very profuse on this subject, but have no time. Much I wish to see you in town. Do you accompany my brother in the spring, or do you come before? The muses I have almost forgot, though I shall have something to say to you on the subject. If want of the *irritamenta malorum* should check your otherwise well-disposed thoughts to a trip to town, let not that stop you: I have at present some few shots in the locker. Your lines, addressed to a fair botanist, make me acquainted with the subject. The specimen you sent I liked much. —— (in the language of kings) salutes you, as does your affectionate brother,

"JOHN TOBIN."

Ecce signum.

The poem alluded to was addressed to a lady on commencing the study of botany at the Hot Wells; and is submitted to the reader's judgment.

Ere yet, she bends her steps to yonder hills,
Where wide the purple heath with fragrance fills

The gladsome gales that waft in conscious pride
The wealth of distant worlds on Avon's tide.
Descend, O Muse, to guard the fair one's fate,
And tell the dangers that her steps await —
Say, shall the god possess with restless fears,
That heart ne'er soften'd but with pity's tears —
Shall that fair bosom, where no troubles dwell,
With love's deep sighs and raging tempests swell?
Yet, as o'er Flora's varied stores you bend,
Those hidden ills upon your steps attend.
Soon as the spring the verdant scene displays,
And Sol uprises with redoubled rays,
All Nature smiling, seems with joy to move,
And hails the presence of prolific love.
Where Rosa [a] blushes 'midst the num'rous train
Who woo the fair one, and not woo in vain,
There spreads the little god his treacherous snare,
There bends that bow, so fatal to the fair,
Or gently hovers 'neath the cooling shade,
Where six bold youths [b] attend a modest maid,
Where Lelia's cheek reclines with love oppress'd,
Whiter than falling snow or Anna's breast:
Where, too, great Ulmus lifts his massy limbs,
While clasping ivy round his body climbs;
Where coy Silene spurns the sun-bright ray [c],
Or Helianthus [d] meets the blaze of day:

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[a] The rose of the class Polyandria, or many males.
[b] Lelia, of the class Hexandria, or six males.
[c] Closes at the sun's approach.
[d] Helianthus moves with the sun.

Where fair Nymphea [e] rises from the flood;
Where white Hibiscus [f] dies imbrued with blood;
Where short-liv'd Cistus [g] quits the burning plain,
Or bold Nigella [h] seeks her captive swains.
Here, too, the loves their lawless revels hold,
Where Vitis [i] arms in many a twining fold,
Clasp the tall Thyrsus, and inflame the soul
Of each fond youth who tastes the madd'ning bowl.
E'en on the craggy rock's aspiring height,
Lost in the rolling cloud from human sight,
The ardent Muschus [k] seeks his little mate,
And there, regardless of the storms of fate,
Tells his soft tale beneath the mountain's snow,
Nor envies nobler swains their loves below.
Aug. 1792.

There can be no doubt that the subject alluded to in the foregoing letter was no other than the drama, to which the younger Tobin began to fix his vacillating attention. The fondness which he almost in infancy imbibed for theatrical amusements, had

[e] Nymphea, the water-lilly.
[f] Hibiscus, whose petals, before they fall, change to a fine red.
[g] Cistus, whose petals fall in a few hours.
[h] In the Nigella, the females bend forward alternately.
[i] Vitis, the vine.
[k] Muschus, the moss.

acquired the energy of a ruling passion. But it was no longer as a simple recreation that he attended the first representation of every new play; or ransacked libraries, public and private, for dramatic volumes; or devoured with avidity every anecdote illustrating the habits and studies of dramatic authors. Convinced that he could never arrive at eminence in his profession, he sought to occupy his mind with some literary pursuit more congenial to his talents and inclinations. As his judgment ripened, he became sensible that he could not obtain a distinguished place in the walks of didactic or heroic poetry: he discovered that satire was not his forte; and that his simple and almost spontaneous lyrics were better calculated to inspire delight, than his more ambitious compositions. He had repeatedly exercised his flexible powers on a variety of subjects; and the result of these experiments allowed him not to doubt, that his real

strength was in versatility. What he wanted in force he supplied by vivacity: without the depth of an original thinker, he had a felicity in appropriating to himself the ideas of others, that assumed the merit of novelty, and rivalled its attractions. In the career of authorship he appears to have been rather an active speculatist, than a daring adventurer: he explored no new regions of poetry, but selected with peculiar skill the spot most susceptible of cultivation and embellishment. Of materials, although he possessed no original mine of wealth, he had access to many auxiliary funds; and in literature, was in a manner a citizen of the world, who carried everywhere his passport and his privilege. He felt that he had received that measure of poetical talent, which enables the dramatist to aspire to distinction. This impression gave a new impulse to his existence: the stage was ever present to his imagination; a succession of scenes and personages passed constantly

before his mental view; and if he did not, like Goethe, sustain an audible conversation with visionary companions, he was surrounded by an ideal representation, engaged in constructing dialogues appropriate to certain personages, or in contriving situations to exemplify particular humours and eccentricities. In attending the inns of court, he was sometimes surprised by an idea, which insensibly expanded to a scene: in traversing the streets he often composed the single stanzas of a song, and at the close of every day was accustomed to insert in a common-place book, whatever happy thoughts had occurred in its progress; and this repertory of wit and fancy afterwards furnished materials for his operatic pieces. During his clerkship he produced but one finished piece, and that was a farce, of which mention will be made in its proper place.

At the expiration of his clerkship,

Tobin continued in the same office, with the expectation of being admitted to partnership; but having learnt that he could not obtain this advantage without superseding the claims of a senior clerk, who was in equity entitled to the preference, he insisted that this gentleman should be included in the arrangement; and to obviate the objections which were suggested to the admission of two distinct names in the firm, he proposed to divide with his friend his share of the concern, and equally with him to submit to the restrictions imposed on a dormant partner. With this arrangement all parties were satisfied*; but the poet appears to have gained neither leisure nor liberty by his nominal independence; with an alienated mind he persisted in his official labours, whilst it became every day too

* This connexion subsisted until Mr. Wildman's death; after which Tobin and his friend entered into an independent partnership.

palpable that he would never be able to attach himself to business: whether he admitted or resisted this conviction, he was too happy in the consciousness that he had discovered the true bias of his mind, to waste one moment in unprofitable regrets; although he appears by the following letter to have been cruelly impeded in his favourite pursuit.

"30th July.

"I have hitherto deferred answering your last, in hopes of being able to give you some satisfactory intelligence of my dramatics, which however I cannot yet do; the opera is in Mr. Harris's hands, and waits for his judgment; and the farce, which is less material, I have not yet determined upon trying at Covent Garden: however, both of them shall certainly take their chance (if I can effect it) the ensuing winter. I have not been quite idle since you left town, having entirely completed a tragedy of four

acts, and written songs and part of the dialogue for another opera, which I hope to finish also soon after the theatres open; (these I shall bring with me to Bristol, and have your advice and assistance in). "I have some other dramatic designs floating in my fancy, which I hope some time or other to realize, and give to them a local habitation and a name. I find the *cacothethes dramaticæ* increases so much upon me, that had I time and independence, I think I should undertake in that way some enterprise of great pith and moment; but the scraps of time I occasionally dedicate to my muse, will not allow of the trial. My chief difficulty is in getting good plots, or in making them, which I think you will be able to give me great help in; and when we meet I mean to have much serious conversation with you upon this subject."

The tragedy thus incidentally mentioned, stands singly amongst the author's various

productions; and it may perhaps be doubted whether he was calculated to succeed in this peculiar department of the drama. He had the eye and the ear of a poet,—a fancy ever flexible and animated,—a felicitous selection of language,—an admirable adroitness in scenical arrangement—he delighted in elevated sentiments, and expressed them with appropriate energy: occasionally he had pathos, and often bursts of spontaneous eloquence: but he possessed not the awful faculty of revealing to the eyes of man the image of his secret soul; nor was he often elevated by his imagination to that higher region of passion, in which the tragic bard discovers with exultation his native element. In this solitary effort, we have however a proof that he had originally ambitious aspirations after dramatic supremacy; and that had fortune permitted him to follow the impulse of feeling, he might have attained a higher rank in literature, and transmitted to posterity a still nobler name.

Considered as a dramatic exercise, this four-act piece is an interesting specimen of the author's early progress; the language is often not less finished, than that of his riper essays; but it betrays an ambition for ornament and imagery, which his mature judgment rejected. Even at this early period, his blank verse flows with a facility and freedom never to be attained by the ordinary class of dramatic writers; but it offers no example of the nervous elegance afterwards exhibited in the Curfew, the Indians, and the Honey-moon. It is unnecessary to expatiate on the defects to be discovered in this juvenile play, which are precisely such as might have been expected from an unpractised writer. The dramatis personæ are obviously wanting in discrimination and consistency; and although the author might in 1794 consider this work as finished, he afterwards discovered that it was but an outline, of which neither the situations nor the characters were fully developed.

Impressed with the belief, that legitimate tragedy would not be accepted from an undistinguished writer, he deferred the task of revision till he should have prepared the way for its favourable reception by some popular drama. But this period never arrived till it was too late to profit by the circumstance.

To gain access to the stage, was the serious business of Tobin's life: to attain this object, he submitted to lower the tone of his ambition, and in a manner to recast his ideas —almost to remodel his mind. It is only for those who are accustomed to literary composition to estimate the difficulty, or to calculate the disadvantage which must inevitably be experienced in passing from the *sublime* to the *familiar*, in exchanging passion for humour, and substituting puns and equivoques for eloquence and magnanimous sentiments.

Although Tobin loved not music, he had

been long addicted to lyrical compositions: he therefore determined to make his first advances to the stage in a comic opera, the subject of which was borrowed from Brome's pleasing comedy of the Merry Beggars or Jovial Crew; the beggars being metamorphosed into gypsies, certainly less romantically attractive than their prototypes. The following extracts, however, do credit to the author's lyrical powers.

SCENE, a Wood. A Dance, and Chorus of Gypsies.

AIR.

O'er the heath, through the wood,
And the wintry flood,
Unfriended by fortune we roam,
No roof keeps us warm,
Yet we weather the storm,
And though strangers, we still are at home.
Merrily,
Cheerily,
Pass we the day,
And the night,
By the light
Of that *slow* worm
The *glow*-worm,
Happily pass away.

We are ragged and poor,
What can fortune do more
To vex and to spite us than now,
Yet contented we look
For the clear running brook,
And the berries which redden the bough.
Merrily, &c.

(They all retire but Lucy and Olivia, who, disguised as gypsies, come forward.)

Olivia. Well, Lucy, what d'ye think of our gypsey life?

Lucy. I'm heartily sick of it already.

Olivia. Now I am quite enraptured with it. It gives us all the privileges of women of quality; we keep our own hours; may have as many lovers as we chuse, and make our own complexions; and though we have the whole world for our habitation, we pay neither house-rent nor window-tax.

Lucy. Go: you were always a madcap: but what will the old folks say, when they find we have eloped?

Olivia. Advertise us for a couple of stray spinsters—or perhaps insert a tempting paragraph in all the country newspapers, that if the two young ladies who lately eloped from their father's house will return to their disconsolate friends, they shall be kindly received, and the past entirely forgotten.

Lucy. Heigh-ho! Would I were at home again.

Olivia. What! and a slave to your mother's caprice, and your father's obstinacy.

Lucy. Liberty is sweet, to be sure; but we purchase it too dearly, when the price is a broken heart.

AIR.

A linnet pilfer'd from his nest,
Consigned to Chloe's care,
Fed by her hand, warm'd by her breast,
No favour'd rival there;
Still felt his little bosom beat
To frolic wild and free,
And left his happy safe retreat,
For truant liberty.

He rov'd, nor thought of Chloe's grief,
Her ill requited love,
Till Autumn shook the falling leaf,
And Winter swept the grove;
He heard the tempest with a sigh
Wild thro' the forest rave,
Flew back, and with repentant eye,
Implor'd to be a slave.

Through the intervention of a friend, this opera was presented to the manager of Covent Garden, who declined its acceptance. The author had fortified himself against disappointment, by writing another piece, decidedly superior to its predecessor; to which he gave the appropriate title of *The Robbery, or Your's or Mine*. Disgusted with the flimsiness and

insipidity which in general characterize operatic pieces, Tobin introduced into this piece a considerable portion of the *vis comica*, and invested it with attractions perfectly independent of music and scenery. At the commencement of his career he indulged the hope that he might eventually reform the system, almost universally established in the production of operatic dramas, of making the dialogues merely appendant to the songs, and the characters and situations subordinate to the music. He contended that the operatic form did not necessarily exclude sense, wit, and humour; and that it was not impossible to furnish popular and attractive songs, which should at once satisfy the mind and enchant the ear. He was sensible of the epidemical mania for music; he repined at the exclusive preference which fashion awarded to the fortunate possessor of a rich voice, and at the homage which a singer usurped from the finest poet or

the most accomplished actor. He could scarcely forbear to stigmatize as affectation that overweening passion for sound and spectacle, in a country which possesses no national music, and among a people generally destitute of the aptitudes for musical excellence. He conceived, however, that it might not be impossible to render even this fatuity subservient to the creation of a peculiar species of dramatic composition, which should at once give scope to the powers of the actor and the singer, and allow the poet to divide the triumph with the composer. This idea was afterwards more fully developed in the Fisherman, and two or three later pieces. Of *Your's or Mine* the reader will form his own judgment. The following beautiful stanza would alone establish the author's lyrical genius.

Absence in Love.

The flower, enamoured of the sun,
At his departure hangs her head and weeps,
And shrouds her sweetness up, and keeps
Sad vigils like a cloister'd nun,
Till his returning ray appears,
Waking her beauty, as he dries her tears.

The following Air is simple and elegant.

As men who long at sea have been,
Kindle at nature's robes of green;
As joys the pilgrim's thirsting soul
To hear the living waters roll;
As mothers clasp their infants dear,
And eye them thro' a joyful tear;
So lovers meet,
With rapture greet.

As maids with midnight vigils pale
Shut up some sweet love-woven tale;
As anglers at day's parting gleam,
Still linger o'er the darkling stream;
As exiles bid the world farewell,
Where all their fondest wishes dwell;
So lovers part,
With breaking heart.

The opera of *Yours or Mine* was not more fortunate than its predecessor; but the unknown applicant resumed possession of his piece, with a determination not to be subdued by disappointment. It might appear surprising that he should persevere after a second repulse; but whilst he saw his claims supplanted by men, to whom he conceived himself to be superior, he could not but cherish the hope that he should eventually surmount every obstacle, and successfully establish his reputation and independence. Many circumstances conspired to nourish this persuasion: the English stage was at that period in a state of unexampled splendour and prosperity: the erection of a new and magnificent theatre which attested the progress of luxury, appeared to announce the triumphs of taste and refinement; and such were the overflowings of public liberality, that not only the actor, but even the author was permitted to share its munificence. The following observations are from the pen of a living dramatist,

whose genius, by a fortunate anticipation, has been so cordially acknowledged by her cotemporaries, that nothing is left for posterity, but to record their verdict.

"There is at present an opinion prevailing in regard to dramatic works, which, if just, is wholly contradictory to every proof of cause and effect, which has been applied to the rise and fall of other arts and sciences. It is said that modern dramas are the worst that ever appeared on the English stage; yet it is well known that the English theatres never flourished as they do at present. When it is enquired why painting, poetry, and sculpture decline in England, want of encouragement is the sure reply; but this reply cannot be given to the question, why dramatic literature fails? for never was there such high remuneration conferred upon every person, and every work, belonging to the drama. A new play, which from a reputed wit of former times would not with success bring

him a hundred pounds, a manager will now purchase from a reputed blockhead, at the price of near a thousand, and sustain all risk whether it be condemned or not. Great, then, must be the attraction of modern plays to repay such speculation. It follows then, that if the stage be really sunk so low as it is said to be, that patronage undeserved has ruined instead of advanced genius. Or is it not more likely that public favour has incited the envious to rail, or at best raised up minute enquirers into the excellence of that amusement, which adorns a whole nation, and criticism sees faults, as fear sees ghosts, whenever they are looked for *."

This is undoubtedly an alluring picture, but it should be remembered, that it was traced by a successful and even popular writer, who, having securely weathered the

* Preface to *Every One has his Fault.*

storm, could smile at the perils, once so formidable and appalling. It will however appear, that at the propitious moment, when fancy hailed the fairest visions of futurity, there existed circumstances most unhappily calculated to overwhelm the ambitious aspirant with doubt and fear, and to crush the efforts of fortitude and perseverance. In the superb theatre which had risen in Drury Lane, on the scite of Sir Christopher Wren's modest edifice, the poet looked in vain for that porch of hospitality, which had been open to his predecessors. Formerly the drama had offered a ready and honourable resource to indigent men of genius: no patron was required to procure them the boon of courtesy; a literary name supplied the best passport to attention; but not even the undistinguished stranger was repelled by rudeness, or dismissed with contempt. The ill-fated Otway was admitted to this sanctuary; and even Savage, that homeless outcast, without

a friend; a connection, found in the theatre both shelter and protection. Farquhar was patronized by Wilks, and Garrick did not disdain to lend encouragement to the humble Kelly.* From the restoration to the close of George the Second's reign, there is scarcely, with the exception of Pope and Prior, a poet of any reputation, who is not enrolled among the dramatists: and to the majority of these candidates, not profit, but reputation was the paramount object. With the theatre was vested the prerogative to rescue talents from neglect,—to abridge the tedious term of literary probation, and extort attention for those who had long languished in seclusion and obscurity. To the literary adventurer, it wore the aspect of a friendly beacon, inviting to hope, and encouraging to perseverance; it allured none with promises of wealth, but some it sheltered from penury, and

* Hugh Kelly, the well-known Author of *False Delicacy*.

others it ransomed from ruin or despair; with noble liberality, it embraced every object of public and private interest, and was at once the temple of fame, and the mansion of charity.

The history of the drama, during great part of a century, offers many pleasing examples of merit, detected and elicited by kindred talent. The actor, naturally the poet's ally, was then his patron: men of real genius rarely stoop to canvass for fashionable suffrage, and still less willingly submit to purchase venal protection; their confidence can only be freely given to those who are qualified to appreciate their merits, and destined to profit by their exertions.

Some years before Tobin commenced his career, this easy communication between authors and actors appears to have been interrupted. A special recommendation became necessary to procure for a play an early reading, and interest or reputation could

alone obtain a favourable hearing. The Sibylline oracles were not more ambiguous than the responses from time to time communicated to those who were without a clue to guide them through the labyrinth; and a chancery suit might terminate during the interval that elapsed between the first and last word.

To attempt to explain the causes of this revolution in the theatrical world is not within the compass of the present work; perhaps that boasted season of prosperity, which incited to the enlargement of theatres, and led to a proportional increase of expenditure, may have been among the primary causes of the change. It is well remarked by Schlegel, "that from the vitiated taste in respect to the splendour of decoration and magnificence of the dresses, the arrangement of the theatre has become a complicated and expensive business; whence it frequently happens that the main requisites, good pieces and good

players, are considered as secondary matters." In the drama, as in the fine arts, it is not always the era of splendour and luxury* that marks the diffusion or the cultivation of real taste. There sometimes exists a childish craving for novelty, a fastidious affectation of elegance, of a spirit widely different from that single-minded love of excellence, which calls forth—which almost creates — the talent it adores. Without the sacred fire of enthusiasm, the splendid altar is raised in vain—without a cordial participation of national sentiment, there can be no pure and acceptable oblation. Forsaken by its protecting divinity, the magnificent temple is no longer the sanctuary, but the monument, of genius. On investigation, it would perhaps appear, that as the rage for decoration increases, the love of the dramatic art declines. When the poet is of less importance than the machinist or the scene painter, and when a favourite singer supplants the most accom-

plished actor, it is in vain to boast of that public liberality which is not exerted for the protection of national talent. *

Amongst the evils originating in the taste for luxury and spectacle, it was not one of the least, that the increased scale of expence must inevitably have rendered the acceptance of a new play a subject of more nice and anxious calculation, and consequently presented additional impedi-

* The following observation of Schlegel, in describing the extravagance of the Roman theatre, happily illustrates this subject. "When magnificence could be carried no farther, they endeavoured to surprise by the novelty of mechanical inventions. In this way, a Roman, at the burial solemnity of his father, caused two theatres to be constructed in honour of him, resting with their backs on each other, and made to move in such a manner, on a single hinge, that at the end of the play they were wheeled round, with all the spectators within them, and formed together into one circus, in which combats of gladiators were exhibited. In the pleasure of the eyes, that of the ears was altogether lost: *rope dancers* and *white elephants* were preferred to *every dramatic entertainment.*"

ments to dramatic authors. In questions of moment, distrust is naturally conceived against inexperience; and inferior men, already known, will in general be preferred to untried writers, however ingenious. A kind of monopoly is thus erected, which leads by turns to the exclusion of talents, or to the deterioration of the dramatic art *, and the powers of invention being exhausted, some temporizing expedient must be adopted, to prolong the term of popular favour.

At the period when Tobin commenced his career, an opinion appears to have been entertained, that nothing like legitimate tragedy or comedy, that is, nothing assimilating to our stock-plays, would be endured

* Les yeux prompts à se lasser d'objets muets pour le cœur et pour l'esprit, solliciteroient de nouveaux plaisirs aussitot usés qu' obtenus ; bientôt la monotonie d'une sterile varieté persuaderoit, que le genie est epuisé, et tout un siécle aurait passé sans presque léguer en ce genre au siécle suivant, un monument honorable de son existence. *Discours sur les Arts, par Mons. Quatremers.*

by a modern audience. A knowledge of the stage, and of what is technically called stage trick, was represented as more essential to success than the knowledge of men and manners, or the possession of taste, imagination, and judgment. Whereever system thus usurps the place of sense and nature, it imposes limitations on the author and the actor; in the latter, abridging the exercise of power, whilst with the former it stifles the energies of invention.*

* To judge by the periodical criticisms of the day, this mechanical system was universally condemned. No journalist, however, exceeds in severity the following strictures of a successful writer. "An acute critic lately said, in one of those assemblies where conversation, though sometimes light, is seldom without meaning,—'A comedy, to please in the present day, must be *made*, not *written*.' It requires no great expanse of comprehension to perceive the meaning of this dogma, the truth of which I am equally ready to acknowledge and to deplore: but should it want illustration, it may be found every week in a popular piece, where a great actor, holding a sword in his left hand, and making aukward gestures with it, charms the audience infinitely more than he could do by all the wit and observation which the ingenious author might have given him, and brings

It is impossible not to suspect that the native vigour of Tobin's mind was in some measure warped by the influence of this artificial system, to which he perceived it would be hopeless to oppose resistance. Fortunately, he had acquired a familiar acquaintance with the mechanism of the stage; and as he was not unskilful in adapting, according to established usage, certain parts to

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down such applauses as the bewitching dialogue of Cibber and of Farquhar pants for in vain. The patient developement of character, the repeated touches which colour it up to nature, and swell it into identity and existence, we have now no relish for: the combinations of interest—the strokes which are meant to reach the heart,—we are equally incapable of tasting. Not a word must be uttered that looks like instruction, or a sentence which ought to be remembered. With actors capable of all that is intellectual, is it not a pity to condemn them to such drudgery? They are no longer necessary. Let Sadlers Wells and the Circus empty themselves to furnish our stage: the understanding and education which distinguish our modern actors are useless to them. *Preface to The Town before you.*

certain performers *, his ill success cannot be ascribed to ignorance or inexperience. It should, however, be remarked, that he had to enter the lists* with authors of undisputed talents and well merited eminence; of whom some were veterans in literature; and others at once warm with youth, and ripe in experience.

It was probably from this conviction that he had been originally induced to direct his attention to operatic pieces, for which he conceived it might be comparatively an easy task to obtain admission to the stage; but he soon discovered, that in this over populous suburb of the drama, he should be absolutely lost in a crowd of competitors, each of whom might perhaps enjoy an advantage he never possessed, in the favour of some popular composer.—*Nil desperan-*

* Not one of his plays appears to have been acted by those performers for whom they were written, yet all were successful.

dum appears to have been Tobin's favourite motto. Excluded from tragic or operatic entrance to the theatre, he turned to comedy; and during an indisposition which confined him to his room, beguiled his sufferings by writing the play of the *Faro Table.* A much longer interval of time was consumed before he could procure for it a manager's eye; but in this more arduous task he had now the assistance of his brother, who, in 1796, came to reside with him in his chambers in the Temple, and from this period is to be considered, not merely the confident, but almost the partner of his literary pursuits.

Abstracted from the ties of consanguinity, there existed for this domestic coalition a melancholy cause, in an increasing malady of sight, by which Mr. James Tobin was not only precluded the choice of a profession, but thrown on the kindness of his friends for the means of pursuing either his studies

or his amusements. In this painful state of privation he gladly embraced the opportunity of lodging beneath the same roof with a beloved brother; in becoming whose auxiliary, he found an object of sufficient interest to fill the blank in his bereaved existence. Although reciprocal benefits flowed from this happy union, the balance was obviously in favour of the dramatist, to whom it secured the privileges of home, divested of its cares, and supplied the pleasures of society, without its distractions. With the two kinsmen was associated an old school-fellow, with whom they lived in a degree of intimacy, such as almost supposed a community of cares and pleasures. To this trio were occasionally added a few intelligent friends; and often, in their plain and externally gloomy apartment, was formed a circle in which philosophers might have gathered instruction, and poets caught inspiration from the lips of kindred genius.

At their simple table, where all that comes vulgarly under the denomination of luxury was proscribed, the mental *delicacies* abounded. Every subject of taste and science was discussed: opinions, moral and political, freely canvassed; and controversy enlivened by wit, without the blandishments of convivial indulgence. From associations such as these it was impossible but that the younger Tobin should derive incalculable advantage; and from this moment there appears a very perceptible improvement in the character and style of his compositions.

The harmony of the brothers was not interrupted by occasional discrepancy of opinion: hour after hour passed in amicable altercation, and the debatable ground was freely traversed on either side. It is, however, admitted, that on subjects connected with his brother's interests, Mr. James

Tobin was not easily induced to be silent; and with the earnestness of genuine affection he continued to animadvert on those habits of thoughtless improvidence which, in their school days, had rendered the poet an unsafe depositary for Mr. Webbe's Christmas gifts; and which, in riper years, perpetually subjected him to imposition and inconvenience. The love of order was a prominent feature in the elder Tobin's character: to his personal interests he was even more indifferent than his brother, and equally incapable of admitting to his breast one sordid thought or selfish sentiment; but he cherished prudence as the basis of generosity, and exacted regularity, as essential to usefulness.

In every action of life, accustomed to regulate his conduct by fixed principles, he could not help deploring the poet's habitual neglect of those minor duties, to which he justly attached importance. His

reproofs were often conveyed in a tone of raillery, and always received by the delinquent with so good a grace, as proved he was utterly incorrigible. The happy serenity of his temper was unalterable by chance or circumstance; and whether he missed the money he had dropt from his purse, or discovered the premature dilapidations in his wardrobe, or listened to the objurgations of his affectionate monitor, he constantly preserved his gaiety and good humour.

On some occasions, the brothers appeared to change characters; when a rejected play was returned from the manager, it was Mr. James Tobin that appeared to suffer, whilst his brother broke the ominous seal with smiling composure. Never were two men more perfectly formed to harmonize, to unite together; they must know little of the human heart, who would require to be informed, that the difference of temperament, the

partial opposition in habits and conduct, by rendering them more completely dependent on each other, contributed to rivet the ties of attachment. It was remarked of the poet, that in his literary capacity, his ordinary habits of improvidence were completely inverted, since he hoarded even his lyrical stanzas with such jealous care, that he could seldom be induced to lend a single song to any periodical publication. Even his social instincts, originally so strong and ardent, confessed the supremacy of his master passion; and, attached as he was to his brother's society, he gladly availed himself of his absence to write in a solitary apartment; not even his faculty of abstraction rendering him indifferent to the privileges of quiet and seclusion.

No sooner was Mr. James Tobin settled in the Temple, than the *Faro Table* became the immediate object of his attention:

and after many delays and difficulties he at length succeeded in procuring for it the perusal of Mr. Sheridan, by whom it was at first so warmly approved, that it was even read in the Green Room, with a promise of being performed the ensuing season. Suspense is inseparable from the poet's destiny. With Tobin, however, this was an interval of pleasing anticipation, since he flattered himself he had at length opened a fruitful vein, and in his alacrity to pursue the advantage, completed a second comedy. When the season arrived, Mr. Sheridan was no longer accessible; nor was it without reiterated importunities that Mr. James Tobin obtained a definitive answer, and with it the play, which, on *reconsideration*, was discovered to bear too close a resemblance to the *School for Scandal*, and (still worse) to contain certain allusions which might be suspected of an invidious meaning to a titled dowager who kept a faro bank. Till this moment the author had not been

aware of this lady's existence. Secluded in his habits, he seldom entered the sphere of fashionable life, and was little acquainted with its diurnal tales of scandal. It had been his object to introduce a female gambler, but he perhaps scarcely believed that the exact prototype could be found in human nature. With regard to the other objection, it was impossible he should stand acquitted either to himself or his friends of a strongly marked resemblance to the *chef d'œuvre* of Sheridan; but it was such as appears to have been rather caught from the sympathy of enthusiastic admiration, than produced by cold and artificial imitation.

On the whole, the unsuccessful issue of this negociation was palliated by many consoling reflections. To have arrested the attention of a Sheridan; — in *such a judge* to have created even a temporary bias in his favour, was highly flattering to a young and hitherto undistinguished author: even

the too obvious resemblance, however fatal to his hopes, was not mortifying to his self love: and when he looked at the marginal notes which that great master of the art had traced in his manuscript, he was disposed to consider them as the infallible predictions of his future fame.

But although his sanguine temper resisted disappointment, it did not render him insensible to impartial criticism; and his second comedy (called the *Reconciliation*) being disapproved by his brother, was not offered to acceptance. With his usual good sense, he perhaps perceived that something more than brilliant dialogue and stage effect was necessary to render legitimate comedy perfectly acceptable to the public. Perhaps, too, he was ready to acknowledge, with characteristic candour, that he possessed not the native richness of humour which makes satire relishing, and wit delightful. His retired habits were

unfavourable to the study of men and manners; even the enviable faculty of abstraction, to which he had so often owed immunity from care and impertinence, might somewhat blunt that exquisite quickness of perception, that rapid yet comprehensive glance of observation, which is so eminently useful to a comic writer. The most active powers of invention require to be renovated and sustained by materials drawn from living nature—Small individualities are the feeders of imagination. To produce original combinations, it is necessary that the dramatic poet should often quit his retreat, and digress from the ordinary track of his mental associations. He must descend familiarly to the haunts of men, to make himself perfectly acquainted with the various classes of society, and acquire the language of universal nature. Without such occasional aberrations, some fresh and vivid touches must always be wanting to his delineations; and even the

happiest productions will leave the impression of effort or suggest the suspicion of imitation.

In the versatility of his powers he had another motive for deserting comedy, which gave no scope to the picturesque imagery that floated on his fancy, or to the elevated moral sentiments that flowed spontaneously from his nervous pen. This original propensity to lyrical poetry was not extinguished: and, like Frank in the *Jovial Crew*, when he heard the nightingale, he was unable to resist the invocation to poetry and nature. But before he quitted the more busy haunts of the drama, he produced the farce of *The Undertaker*, which, though never performed, has always been admired by theatrical readers. This was the last piece to which he prefixed a prologue, and the manner in which it was produced illustrates those habits of abstraction which attended him through life. In

a country walk with his brother and their school friend, he suddenly became inattentive to the conversation, and followed their steps in total silence. Mr. James Tobin at length demanding the subject of his reveries, he confessed he had been engaged in composing the finishing lines to he prologue of a farce, which he meant to read to them the following day.

> With scenes like these the author of to-night
> Means not your gentle senses to affright.
> An Undertaker of no common sort,
> His only pride it is, to make you sport:
> Who humbly hopes, whilst others of the trade
> By funerals furnished have their fortunes made,
> A modest Undertaker here might thrive,
> Whose wish it is to keep you all alive.

But the prologue he had been eager to finish was not put in requisition, for the happy moment of representation was never destined to arrive.

Like many other good writers, Tobin confessed the difficulty he experienced in con-

structing a good dramatic fable; but this incapacity appears to have proceeded rather from caution than slowness of invention. Knowledge often diminishes confidence; and it was from his quick perception of the dangers incident to the undertaking, that he so rarely hazarded the introduction of a perfectly novel situation; justly considering it safer to occupy some neglected station, which experience had shown to be tenable.

He had long observed that tragi-comedy, or, as Schlegel calls it, the old romantic drama, was the antient and permanent favorite of the English stage, and from the brilliant example of the younger Colman, was encouraged to assume the liberty of our elder writers, in alternating prose with blank verse. For the foundation of his dramas he chose those old feudal times, so congenial with romantic events, and naturally requiring the agency of music

and spectacle. Having carefully traced his plan, he soon completed the play, at present well known by the appropriate name of *The Curfew.*

From the commencement of his domestic establishment with his brother, it had been customary with Tobin to submit every play, in the order in which it was produced, to the critical ordeal of the few intimate friends to whom his projects were confided. On such occasions it was usual for the author to address his judges with an air of mock gravity, sometimes deprecating severity, in a short extempore prologue. The play was then read aloud, when each was free to offer remarks, or to state objections, to which he listened with becoming deference, but without visible emotion. Although careful to watch the impressions of his hearers, he was perfectly sensible that such a select circle could form no accurate criterion of popular feeling. Scholars and philosophers have

small share in influencing the decisions of a mixed audience; nor can the general effect of a play be correctly ascertained from the verdict of a few intelligent men, accustomed to form their judgment according to fixed but abstract principles of taste, and to institute comparisons with models of approved excellence. Before such a tribunal it was not possible that Tobin should escape censure; since he wrote for representation, and was unavoidably compelled to lower his standard to arbitrary regulations and existing circumstances, in opposition to his better judgment.

On reading *The Curfew* in the little green-room of Benard's Inn, the author, though, as usual, severely criticised, was hailed with cordial and unequivocal marks of approbation. It was supposed that the language of this play, which constitutes one of its primary attractions, could not fail to recommend it to the critical rulers of Drury Lane.

It was therefore offered to that theatre; and submitted to the perusal of Mr. Wroughton, a manager eminently possessing discrimination, liberality, and taste; but, unfortunately, not invested with that supremacy, which could have rendered his good wishes effective. As good actors are almost necessarily excellent judges of dramatic composition, it could not escape this gentleman's discernment, that the drama presented to him was from no ordinary pen; but as he at the same time discovered in it certain redundancies and peculiarities which might militate against its success, he immediately restored the copy to the author, candidly stating his objections, and promising, when these were obviated, to give it his strongest recommendation to the person or persons in whom was vested the power of acceptance. In these emendations, the confidential friends of Tobin heartily concurred; he therefore carefully revised his drama, beginning with the title, which was changed

from *The Norman,* to *The Curfew.* The next part of the process was, probably, to curtail the part of Fitzharding, which evidently belongs to tragedy; and it is a blemish of the play, that the poet's vigorous conception of this character is not sustained by corresponding dignity of action. To the fable a *primum mobile* is obviously wanting: the interest is not sufficiently concentrated, and sympathy escapes in the multiplicity of objects. A few of the situations are, though striking, artificial: but in the gentle expostulation of Florence with her father are some of those beautiful touches of truth and nature which never fail to reach the heart.

I have ever been
A most obedient child.—From memory's dawn,
Have hung with silent awe upon your lips,
And in my heart, your counsels treasur'd up,
Next to the hallowed precepts of my God.
But with a new delight my bosom throbb'd,
When first you talk'd of Bertram.—You observed,
He was a handsome youth.—I thought so too;—
A brave one.—My heart beat with fearful joy.

Not rich, you added: there I heav'd a sigh,
And turn'd my head aside. But whilst the tear
Stood on my cheek, you said, that Fortune's gifts
Were poor, compar'd with Nature. — Then, my father,
You bade me learn to love him.

In the same strain is the concluding passage of this beautiful scene.

Nay, my father —
He is gone, and will not listen to his child.
Then, since a cruel parent has disowned me,
Bertram, I am all thine. —
And now, that I have given up all to thee,
And cast out every other hope of joy,
If thou should'st ever treat me with unkindness,
Reprove me with sharp words, or frowning looks,
Or (which is keenest agony to those
Who deeply love) torture me to the soul
With civil, cutting, cold indifference. —
No, thou art truth itself, I will not doubt thee.

To what eminence might not the author have aspired, who at this early period * was capable of such admirable composition. Of how many exquisite productions may we have been deprived by the perverted taste

* *The Curfew* was written before the author had completed his twenty-eighth year.

which could remain insensible to such genuine merit.

The Curfew was again presented, but although sanctioned by Mr. Wroughton's cordial recommendation, was decidedly rejected; on what real grounds it would now be difficult to hazard a plausible conjecture. No feasible reason appears to have been alleged; but it has been suspected that the opposition originated in a supposed coincidence of opinions and sentiments with the celebrated author of Caleb Williams; a work which had, it is to be observed, formed the basis of a successful play. It is not easy to divine what were the sentiments contained in *The Curfew* which could inspire alarm, or incur reprobation. Not surely the following speech of Bertram.

'Tis now too late
To measure back the dust of my progenitors,
And stamp it with nobility. — What, then,
Am I to hang my head — creep into corners —

Because my father was a hind. — I know not
Why I was pressed into this bustling world;
But here I am, and let my deeds proclaim me.

The concluding speech of Fitzharding is in a masterly strain of eloquence and passion.

What you have made me, still expect to find me,
A man struck from the catalogue of men,
Exiled from all society — stampt like Cain,
To wander savage and forlorn. Why, then,
Revenge be still my solitary comfort;
By darkness and by daylight my companion;
My food, my sleep, my study, and my pastime.

In the history of the modern stage there is perhaps nothing more disgraceful than the unqualified rejection of a drama decidedly superior to the far greater part of cotemporaneous productions.

From the unfortunate issue of this negociation, Tobin had reason to felicitate himself that his secret was unsuspected, and that the disappointment of his hopes was

not liable to that sinister interpretation which ignorance and detraction are ever ready to pronounce on similar disappointments. With the world, it is success alone that legitimates pretensions; and whoever is known to have often missed his aim, should look, not for sympathy and respect, but derision and contempt. It must be the inevitable tendency of defeat to create distrust: even in amiable minds there often exists a sort of superstitious persuasion of a certain fatality attached to certain individuals, which, if it does not extinguish kindness, at least slackens the efforts of friendship. The disappointed man, by all but magnanimous or enthusiastic souls, is abandoned to his destiny: selfishness adopts the language of cautious calculation; and by an exaggeration of difficulties, adroitly evades the requisitions which might otherwise be made on sympathy or kindness.

But Tobin stood not alone. In his bro-

ther he possessed a friend not to be moved by chance or circumstance: and sustained by his encouragement, and that latent confidence inseparable from the possession of real talent, he determined to persevere till he should overcome. His literary studies were still confined to those hours which should have been given to recreation: from nine till twelve in the evening being the only portion of time that he could dedicate to his favorite pursuit. In society, although his conversation was spirited and intelligent, he excited no suspicions of authorship, and was generally considered as a sensible man, who cared less for money than books, and by his abstracted habits was unfitted for business.

It was often with difficulty that Mr. James Tobin repressed the impulse which prompted him to do justice to his brother's merits; and when he heard his prudence suspected, or his indolence condemned, he was apt to

say, with a secret consciousness of exultation, "There is more in John than you are aware of;" and by this ambiguous allusion to his brother's pursuit, in some degree relieved the feelings of his affectionate heart.

Among Tobin's familiar associates there were also some well-meaning advisers, who exhorted him to think more of his clients, and less of managers; concluding with the trite remark, that poets lived and died in poverty. To such representations he sometimes replied with perfect good humour, "I shall yet live to be rich, and leave good *copyhold* property behind me."

To a dramatic probationer there are few trials of temper more severe than those capricious gusts of popular feeling which sometimes lift into notice what was yesterday insignificant, and to-morrow shall be forgotten. Hitherto Tobin had seen his claims superseded by the prescriptive rights

of celebrity, or the preponderance of favouritism: but what was his mortification when, seated in his aerial car, amidst humanized sylphs and gnomes—Kotzebue suddenly alighted on the English stage, of which, almost without being naturalized, he took absolute possession. To account for this phenomenon, it has been pretended that there existed a close affinity between the English and German schools, since they alike disclaimed the oppression of scholastic rules, and constantly asserted the rights of truth and nature. Unfortunately for this argument, the drama of Kotzebue bears more affinity to the drama of Diderot, than to the primitive stock of English poetry. His characters are always of the romantic cast — his language rather breathes the monotonous falsetto of sentimentality, than the genuine and ever-new and varied strain of passion and nature: yet it must be acknowledged Kotzebue is not destitute of pathos; his scenes are

often picturesque, and by the novelty derived from foreign manners, they afforded a seasonable relief to the mannerism and limitation which system had produced on the English stage. It certainly would have been easy to find many English dramatists to whom he was indisputably inferior in talents and moral feeling; but Fashion declared in his favour, and by a whimsical contradiction, the dramatist who was held in least repute in the literary circles of Germany, became the idol of that country which could alone boast of Shakespeare.

"Some years ago, (observes Schlegel), several German plays found their way to the English stage.—Plays which, it is true, are with us the favourites of the multitude, but which are not considered by the intelligent as forming a part of our literature, and in which distinguished actors are almost ashamed of hearing applause.

"These pieces have met with extraordinary favour in England; they have, properly speaking, as the Italians say, *fatto furore*; though the critics did not fail to declaim against their immorality, veiled over by sentimental hypocrisy. From the poverty of our dramatic literature, the admission of such abortions in Germany may be easily comprehended: but what can be alleged in favour of this depravity of taste in a nation like the English, which possesses such treasures, and which must therefore descend from such an elevation?"

It is painful to reflect how much the unpatriotic predilection for Kotzebue must have depressed and discouraged national talents, when the author of *Every One has his Fault*, so capable of enriching our national literature with original productions, was condemned to waste her fine powers in finishing his imperfect sketches, and attempting to transfuse into his fantastic groups

distinctness and truth, life and harmony. Although Tobin had often submitted his better taste to theatrical authority, he was inflexible in his oppositions to the sentimental jargon of this new school, and never could prevail on himself to fraternize with its founder. The genius of Sheridan was less disdainful, and *Pizarro* remains to commemorate the moment of popular effervescence which once prevailed for romance and Kotzebue.

The success of this piece, being generally attributed to its magnanimous sentiments, (to which political events had given interest and importance,) Tobin felt his emulation excited to produce an American play, and whilst he was eagerly seeking a subject, his attention was accidentally directed to the recent example of Gen. Bowles (the accredited ambassador from the Creeks and Cherokees to his Britannic Majesty), who had spent the winter of 1791 in London.

Since the days of Plutarch's heroes, there have existed few adventurers of spirit more intrepid, or more romantic fortunes, than this once celebrated American. Descended from British parents, but born in Maryland, some years previous to the American war, he imbibed in childhood the loyal sentiments of his fathers, and at the age of thirteen quitted his paternal home to join the British camp, where being admitted as a volunteer, he already gave indications of invincible courage, but being with his regiment at Pensacola, he was for some slight misdemeanor ignominiously dismissed, and abandoned to his fate. In this desolate situation, without money or friends, he was protected by certain Creek Indians, who had come as trading agents to Pensacola, and who, compassionating his youth and destitute condition, conducted him to their native territory; but their customs not permitting an alien to reside among them, he was adopted by one of their

chiefs, and treated with the respect due to a soldier. The Creeks being exposed to harassment from their Spanish neighbours in the Floridas, Bowles planned an expedition against them, and signalized his gratitude and his valour in a series of heroic achievements, which obtained for him the dignity of a Sachem, with the endearing appellation of "The Beloved Warriors." In this character he received a deputation, and actually concluded a treaty with the British officer by whom he had been formerly disgraced. On a subsequent occasion, the sentence which had been passed against him was annulled, and himself reinstated in the British service*.

It would have been a daring effort to introduce to the stage a living hero, who,

* Several years ago a biographical sketch of this extraordinary man's early youth was published, to which the subsequent events of his life would form a melancholy sequel, since, after all his trials and vicissitudes, he breathed his last in a Spanish prison.

though of English extraction, was not enrolled in the number of our compatriots; and whose story reflects no credit on our country. In one instance indeed, the personal and local drama has been completely successful. In the *Such Things are* of Mrs. Inchbald, Howard is introduced as Halsewell, in the character of a philanthropist; and this fortunate appropriation was acceptable to pride and patriotism, and cherished as an honourable commemoration of departed virtue. In the life of Bowles there were, however, two passages susceptible of theatrical representation; and both in his abandonment by the British officers, and his subsequent reception of them in the dignified character of a Sachem, he might have become the object of popular sympathy; but it appears to have formed no part of Tobin's plan, to introduce the young Marylander in propriâ personâ, and he contented himself with generalizing on the character and destiny of an accomplished Englishman,

whom injustice and misfortune had thrown on the mercy of an Indian tribe, of which he was hereafter destined to become the defender and the benefactor. Unfortunately for his plan, the North American Indians are not presented to the mind under those romantic features, with which the associations of history and poetry have invested the Peruvian people; unhappily, too, the accurate acquaintance we have acquired of their actual modes of existence, must inevitably destroy the illusions of the imagination. The sombre monotony of savage life, offers few materials for dramatic combination; and in constructing a play of five acts, the poet was unavoidably obliged to derive his leading incidents from the passions and prejudices which prevail in civilized society. It is difficult to account for the author's selection of his subject, unless we can suppose him to have been influenced almost unconsciously by the impulse he had received from Kotzebue.

Such was the origin of *The Indians*, a play which, allowing for the irregularity of its fable, contains many striking passages, and some dramatic situations.

The soliloquy of Zoa, in contemplating the miniature of a supposed rival, is a charming delineation of female jealousy.

Let me look on it — What a face is here!
How fresh the red and white of her complexion.
The parting locks that hang on either side
Of this fair forehead. — What, his wife! these lips,
They can talk many languages, and sing
The song of his own country — This white hand —
Yet shall she be his wife? — This hand can play
On many instruments, and knows, by tunes,
A thousand witcheries to charm him from me.
I never thought how foul I look'd till now.

The following indignant exclamation of Raymond, is worthy of the author of the Curfew;—

Away, I have no appetites that need
A slave, for I am master of myself. —
Thy dance or song may soothe me; and I thank thee:
But for the other offices thou namest,
Wert thou a dog of but an hour's acquaintance,
I would not so degrade thee.

The scene between Raymond and Almanza contains many beauties. The recital of the former is given with much address; and the progress of his attachment to Zoa traced with delicacy and feeling.

She led me to her hut — brought me fresh food,
And water from the spring — watch'd o'er my sleep;
And when I woke, she gave me food again.
Thus three long weeks she nurs'd me — and meanwhile
Taught me her language with a breath so sweet,
And was so apt a scholar learning mine,
(For of such little offices as these,
The mighty sum of love is all made up,)
That, with reviving health, I drew in that
Which wanted still a cure; — and not long after,
When of the Creeks I was appointed chief,
Then I remember'd Zoa, and her care
Of me, at life's extremity. — Yes, then,
In the full face of our assembled warriors,
I took her for my wife; — and shall I leave her?
No — not for all the white-complexion'd dames that dazzle Europe.

The Indian invocation to the manes of departed heroes, previous to the sacrifice of the prisoners, is full of spirit and energy.

Ye whose death, still unrequited,
Groans for vengeance from the tomb,
Hither, from the land of spirits,
Souls of slaughter'd warriors come.

The scene between Raymond and Abdalla offers some striking passages. The following speech of Raymond is in a strain not unworthy of the Honey-moon.

Ay, this looks well — thy tread is firm and even:
Thou bear'st thyself erect — thine hand is steady;
There is honest gratulation in thine eye.
Here is no poison; each proud look and gesture
Pourtrays the noble image of a man
Who holds the cup of comfort to his fellow.
Pleasure may dance in her full draughts of wine;
Health sparkles here.

The Indians would have been still more worthy of admiration, had not the author, in the vain attempt to render the piece susceptible of representation, deformed it with a barbarism, which he was led to consider an indispensable condition of acceptance. Having been taught to believe,

that he must provide a part for a particular comic performer; he was induced to invest the lover of Almanza with the flippancy of a footman, and the vulgarity of a buffoon, and, notwithstanding this concession, had the mortification to add *The Indians* to the list of his rejected plays.

During the two succeeding years, he appears to have been wholly employed in preparing plots and dialogues for operatic dramas. From the steadiness with which he pursued this task it is obvious that he still entertained the idea of introducing a reform in this department of the stage, in which he might with reason hope to establish his claim to pre-eminence. As a genuine lover of the drama, he could not witness, without pain, the incoherent series of extravagance and incongruity, which, under the name of opera, continued to engross the patronage of fashion; whilst not only good authors, but admirable actors

were neglected, and the stage itself was inevitably subjected to degradation and contempt. He was sensible that to correct this evil, something more than criticism or philosophy was required, and that operatic nonsense was only to be displaced by productions of a similar species, but superior character, in which its volatile fantastic features should be ennobled by an expression derived from the legitimate drama. He believed it to be possible to combine with Spectacle the charms of poetry and eloquence, and to conciliate the rival claims of wit and harmony, and of tragical romance with comic humour. Such was the system on which he often expatiated in familiar conversation, and such the principles to which he adhered in writing *The Fisherman*, and two or three unfinished operas. In each of these pieces, the basis of the story was romance, and unfolded in that nervous blank verse, which constituted one of his chief merits. In *The Fisherman*, it is true, the author

appears to have concentrated his strength in the comic scenes, some of which are perhaps only inferior to his *Honey Moon;* the songs were written at different intervals, and through the medium of admiring friends, many of them were recited in certain literary circles. Of all Tobin's compositions, this appears to have been most generally relished and approved by his literary associates; who uniformly ascribed to it a novelty and elegance of design — a certain romantic fascination, derived from the mingled influence of fancy and poetry — and the abrupt, but not ungraceful transitions, from the imaginary to the vulgar world, which they discovered in no former production. Although this drama appears not to have ever received those finishing touches of the author's pen, which diffuse so many nameless beauties, it was offered for representation, and at the suggestion of a manager, compressed into two acts; but in this experiment

the author was singularly unfortunate; and shocked by the mutilation he had inflicted, he willingly consigned it to oblivion. *The School for Authors*, one of his most pleasing efforts in comedy, was, in 1800, offered and rejected. There is in this play one scene, written perhaps from the impression of personal feelings, in which the author betrays a sensibility that was rarely permitted to escape his pen; it is in the interview between Cleveland and his beloved Jane, who, when he announces the performance of his play, declares her resolution to witness the representation.

Jane. I feel it will be a trial, yet don't attempt to dissuade me. I will seek out some gloomy dim-lighted corner of the house, where my varying cheek shall be unnoticed — my beating heart unheard; where hope, unperceived, may elevate, and fear depress me: from whence, if you are successful, I may bear the tidings with the speed of sound; and if you should fail — but I don't think you'll fail — rather than you should fail, I'll make a speech to the audience myself.

Clev. My sweet girl — and what will you say to them?

Jane. I will tell them, it is the first fond child of your

fancy; the growing darling of many anxious days, of some sleepless nights.

Clev. It is, indeed!

Jane. That its success will crown the hopes of two young and faithful hearts; and that, if it should fail — but it can't fail — it won't fail — I shall break my heart if it fails.

Clev. Nay, nay; calm your emotions; it will come fairly and fully before a jury of my countrymen; and, though I fall by their verdict, I will not arraign their justice.

Unsubdued by opposition, the poet preserved an unalterable conviction, that he should ultimately achieve his object; and having expressed his willingness to embrace any expedient to obtain a single introduction to the stage, it was suggested by a friend that he should prevail on some popular performer to bring out his piece for a benefit. This proposal was, therefore, made to Mr. Munden, who, having read with approbation a farce which had been his most juvenile production, it was announced for representation in April 1803, by the title of *All's fair in Love*, or *A Match for the Lawyer*. To the author

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of *The Curfew*, this was indeed to launch a raft on the ocean, but repeating his motto of *Nil desperandum*, he repaired to the theatre on the appointed evening, and without any visible emotion, took his station in the pit, accompanied by his brother, who could not so easily divest himself of anxious apprehensions. The author, on the contrary, declared, that after a momentary agitation, he became as composed as an indifferent spectator. May it not be suspected, that this apparent indifference disguised the latent feelings of chagrin and regret, with which he must have contemplated the result of his long and meritorious probation? After all his exertions, his diligence, his perseverance, he had at length succeeded in bringing out a *benefit farce*, and such were the fruits of his long cherished hopes — such the sordid reality of his magnificent anticipations.

The farce, though successful, was not

repeated; and it was suggested to the author that he must renounce his claims to the production, if he hoped to distinguish himself by undertakings of a higher order. Wearied with controversy, and almost exhausted by the unavailing effort to reconcile discordant interests, Tobin took at length the spirited resolution to write according to the dictates of his own mind, and without regard to those by-laws of the stage to which he had hitherto paid observance. A question was one day started in his chambers at Bernard's Inn, how far it might be practicable to resuscitate the old English comedy, as it existed in the age of Shakespeare and Fletcher. Mr. James Tobin maintained that this suggestion was perfectly feasible, and that the effort, if sustained by talent, would possess the attraction of novelty. On this question the poet appeared to suspend his judgment, but finally answered it by producing the comedy of *The Honey-moon*.

According to his conceptions, the old school of comedy was distinguished by a felicitous and luxuriant characterization: abstractedly, the fable might involve every possible extravagance and absurdity; magic was sometimes invoked to assist invention; poetry and romance alternately with wit and drollery might conspire to its embellishment; but the basis of all was character; and often from a single trait of individuality were derived plot — incident — intrigue — denouement. To illustrate this remark, he was accustomed to refer to various comedies of the last age, of which the prominent personages had been transferred from the page of our elder writers, stript of poetry and romance, but less incongruous with the modern style of manners. It was another feature of the old comedy that it paid no observance to national laws and customs, since the drama was allowed to constitute a fanciful country, not limited to geographical lines of division. Truth was required in the character, and a certain harmony in

the design and the sentiments: — beyond this, all might be fictitious, or even marvellous; the utmost latitude was allowed to the poet's invention.

Tobin had occasion for all his self-possession on reading this play (according to custom) to his confidential friends, who, not satisfied with attacking that part of the plot which is confessedly the least tenable (the deception employed by the duke), unsparingly denounced the plagiarism in character, in the extravagance of the story— its incredible incidents, and unsatisfactory conclusion. To this the author replied, that he had not copied more freely than was allowed to modern writers: that with regard to the fable, he was entitled to assume the privilege always permitted to the old comedy, of being exonerated from a nice observance of realities: that it had been his object to produce a genuine transcript of the elder school; and if in this he had succeeded, he should conceive himself acquitted of his

obligation. Although these arguments might silence cavil, they did not remove the impression that such a play would not be endured by a modern audience: and so decidedly did these critics pronounce condemnation, that the author experienced neither surprise nor disappointment, when *The Honey-moon* was rejected at Covent Garden theatre. At Drury Lane it was referred to future consideration: but unfortunately the author's secret had transpired. It was whispered, that he had often applied to managers, and that if he should once succeed, he would inevitably become a prolific and tenacious monopolist. Whether this surmise operated to his prejudice or not, the fate of the play was still suspended; when the author, who had too long neglected the state of his health, was constrained to remove to the country, to avoid the probable consequences of another winter in town. From childhood he had been rather delicate than robust, and his constitution was gradually

undermined by sedentary habits and unremitted application. During the ten years in which he kept his eye constantly fixed on the stage, he scarcely allowed himself the common indulgence of sleep and recreation —of exercise and amusement. Even the summer did not always allure him to the country; and he sometimes spent the whole year in London, never quitting its smoky atmosphere but for his favourite pursuit of angling. It is remarked by all his friends, that he possessed an elasticity of temper which never permitted him to nourish chagrin, or to sink under despondence. It is, however, impossible not to suppose that success might have invigorated that frame which he had too long neglected, and which could not have been wholly inaccessible to the influence of disappointment. His increasing indisposition had long attracted the notice of his friends, before he acknowledged any cause of complaint. Wearied by their importunity, he at length consented, without ascertaining the fate of the *Honey-moon*, to

leave London, and spend the winter of 1804 with a relation who resided in Cornwall: of which the mild salubrious air, it was hoped, would contribute to re-establish his declining health.

In leaving London he did not immediately relinquish his long cherished pursuits; since he revised the songs of his *Fisherman*, and analysed several Spanish pieces, with a view to future dramatic compositions. He had long been a diligent student in Spanish literature; but having seldom extended his analysis of a Spanish play beyond the first act, it may be presumed he was wearied with the sameness, or discouraged by the intricacy, which forms a prominent feature of those romantic dramas; he has, however, left a complete epitome of the *Gitonilla di Madrid*, the Gypsey of Madrid, from the celebrated Don Antonio di Solis. The latter has been inserted in this volume, partly because it illustrates the peculiar habits of Tobin's enterprising, in-

defatigable mind, and partly because it affords a convincing proof that he no longer anticipated the performance of the Honeymoon, from which he proposes the transference of a scene in the fourth act, to enliven the comparatively insipid pages of the Gypsey.

From childhood Tobin had been eminently distinguished by two qualities seldom associated in the same individual — perseverance and facility; and he possessed, almost in an equal degree, the inextinguishable ardour that defies obstacles, and the spirit of accommodation that reconciles itself to disappointment. His tranquil retreat soon discovered to him new objects of interest and enjoyment: his uncle's house was furnished with an excellent library, which tempted him to revive the studies of his youth. He re-perused, with avidity, the old English dramatists; and suddenly conceived the idea of preparing for publication a new edition of Shake-

speare. In the following letter, addressed to his brother, he appears to have been so completely engrossed by this undertaking, as to have abandoned the hope, and almost dismissed the recollection, of *The Honey-moon.*

" Dear James,

" You must get —— to read this. And first, as the Shakespeare subject, next to my health, dwells most at present on my mind, I will discuss that. I can see nothing in your objections (indeed they are not great) to the plan; nor am I terrified by any gentleman's collecting materials for an edition. Of the very many who have published the works of our great poet, by far the greater number have failed altogether, and a great number partially: this has convinced me that the undertaking is serious; and that to execute it well, requires a great deal more talent than you seem to think necessary. Stevens has perhaps contributed more than all the rest put together

to the illustration of Shakespeare's text: what he has done has been entirely by dint of study; and being void both of taste and sagacity, he is wrong almost as often as he is right. Malone is more correct, has more taste, and has certainly done much. Warburton is, as a commentator on Shakespeare, a man whom too much learning has made mad: his explanations are nine times out of ten completely visionary. Johnson took no pains; he does nothing but guess, and generally wrong. Farmer is allowed to be ingenious; but he has taken such liberties with his author, that his edition is now almost universally exploded. Theobald made some good hits, but he did little. The last editor of importance (a Mr. Reed, who was appointed by Stevens to the task) has published twenty volumes in very large octavo, the notes printed small; he has added but few notes of his own, though he appears a black letter man. There are some ingenious notes from friend Douce; and some from Holt White. Our ob-

ject will be to shorten the present edition considerably, by cutting out a vast deal of matter, which has no more to do with the illustration of Shakespeare than any thing else, and to add our own notes; which will leave the work (I should hope) a third less bulky than it is at present. We are going on very well, except that ——, having been poorly some time, has been unable to attend to the ornamental part of our design: he is however indefatigable in reading for the work. The books recommended in your last, we happen to have here; and having read them through, as well as many others, I must trouble you to send me down the following: — Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays; Beaumont and Fletcher's Plays; Evans' Old Ballads; Ray's Proverbs; Marston's Plays; Daniel's Tragedy of Cleopatra; Brown's Works; we shall not want Chatterton, the words he has adopted not being of Shakespeare's age; the Biographia Dramatica; and any others I may have forgotten, published before the year 1600, or

soon after it. The most valuable books, I conceive, are those which treat of the manners and customs of those times; dictionaries, which were then scarce; plays, and poems: but the great desideratum is to get books that are not generally known, and therefore have not been generally pillaged: but those you will consult in town are perfectly competent judges of what will be useful.

"As to my health, the oppression on my chest is not removed: indeed, though it be now getting fast into June, we have had terrible weather till within these four days. I have been several times on the water in my uncle's very complete pleasure-boat. I think I have so far received benefit as to ground a reasonable expectation that a course of this exertion and air will be of great service to me.

"I had forgot, sir, to say, in the fore part of my letter, that your idea of our copying the whole of Shakespeare is erroneous: we

must get the last edition interleaved, and cut him up for the purpose.

"I am glad to find that —— has such good employment, and wish it were permanent. As to our speculation of a partnership, I begin to fear it must end in fume; and I would not, for an hour, stand in his way, if any thing should arise by which he might better his situation."

During his residence in Cornwall, Tobin never alluded to the circumstance of his having written plays; but whenever the drama became the subject of conversation, he discovered such prompt and familiar acquaintance with its literature, and such critical accuracy and felicity of observation in every thing connected with the stage, that it was impossible not to suppose he entertained the idea of becoming a dramatic author. In the meanwhile the Shakespearean study so completely engrossed his attention, that he became estranged from the

Muses; and no longer found in solitude, the nurse of poetry. Two or three of his finest lyrical effusions, are however traced to this period; in particular, the song in *The Fisherman*, beginning with '*Land of my blighted hopes, Adieu.*' When he drew this picture of a despairing exile, he little thought he should so soon be destined to bid an eternal farewell to his native country.

Whilst he was thus detaching himself from his former pursuit, *The Honey-moon*, which had been long incarcerated at Drury Lane theatre, narrowly escaped being ignominiously dismissed with other literary lumber. Fortunately, it was reserved for Mr. Wroughton, whose interference on a former occasion had proved wholly unsuccessful, to rescue this play from unmerited oblivion. Through his importunity, it was submitted to unprejudiced decision, and finally, to the unspeakable joy of Mr. James Tobin, *declared* to be accepted. Not one moment was lost in

transmitting to his brother the welcome intelligence, accompanied by a strict injunction, that he should immediately prepare the prologue and epilogue; but the time was passed, in which the poet would have obeyed this mandate with eager alacrity. Consumption continued daily to gain ground on his enfeebled frame, and at this moment he was leaving Cornwall, to return to Bristol, from whence he was to embark for the West Indies; a voyage being recommended as the last resource to re-establish his declining health. In the first emotion of pleasure, however, he prepared to fulfil his brother's wishes; but after some painful efforts, which ended in producing only four lines, he resigned the pen, with the unwilling confession, that he was unequal to the attempt. On his arrival at Bristol, his energies seemed to revive, whilst he secretly enjoyed the astonishment with which his father, (for the first time apprized of his dramatic pursuits), received the in-

timation that *The Honey-moon* was in rehearsal. Could mental excitement alone arrest the progress of bodily decay, Tobin must now have triumphed over disease; he at least flattered himself he should soon be well, and calculated with such precision the duration of his absence, and referred with such confidence to his restoration to England, that it appeared almost impossible to distrust the accomplishment of his predictions. Although his debility was hourly increasing, he continued to collect materials for future plays; to cherish aspirations for excellence; to indulge the dreams of happiness and fame. It was late in November when he embarked at Bristol, after a cheerful parting from his parents and friends, who probably little imagined it was to prove eternal. During his short voyage to Cork, he was constantly admonished of his impending fate, by the hectic appearance of a lady who, like himself, appeared to be rapidly sinking to an untimely

grave*. Such, however, was the cheerfulness of his temper, that even the contemplation of her sufferings only excited commiseration, without suggesting one personal apprehension; yet so strongly was he impressed with the conviction of her immediate danger, that he dwelt on this subject in the last letter which he ever wrote, and in which, whilst the vessel was getting under weigh, he once more spoke with confidence of his speedy return to Europe, his future exertions, his smiling prospects, and sanguine anticipations. For the first time he ventured to trace a plan of domestic felicity, founded on a mutual attachment, and sanctioned by the promised boons of success and independence. The barrier which had so long impeded his wishes was now removed. He discovered no future difficulties to perplex his course. A few months and all would be well, and he should enter the long-desired haven.

* This lady is living, and in good health.

Such were the impressions with which, in the afternoon of the 7th of December, he commenced his voyage; the night proved boisterous, but it passed quietly with Tobin, who had retired to his bed, and dismissed his attendant. Towards morning the wind became contrary and it was judged expedient to return to Cork harbour. Amidst the bustle and confusion incident to this situation, it was remarked that all was silent in Tobin's cabin; but this circumstance excited little surprise in those accustomed to witness his habitual self-possession and composure. No suspicions were entertained of his safety; and it was simply to offer refreshment, that his attendant approached the bed, when it was discovered that the poet indeed slept—to wake no more. It was in vain to surmise at what moment he had breathed his last; no groan was heard, no murmur escaped his lips: and it is with reason to be presumed, that the stream of

life ran pure to the last drop, and that death came like a peaceful slumber after the festival of enjoyment.

The ship being driven back to Cork, an opportunity was offered for his interment; and when the intelligence of his death reached his afflicted family, the last duties had been performed on his lonely grave. But if his funeral was unattended, his death was not unlamented by those to whom he had been long an object of interest and attachment; and the following sketch of his character, written, after an interval of fifteen years, by one who was long numbered with his most intimate and highly valued associates, will best shew that he was eminently happy in his friends, and that his choice was justified by the unalterable sentiments which are still cherished for his memory.*

* J. P. Burre Esq. of Gray's Inn.

"As you desire from me some account of the habits and character of the late Mr. John Tobin, I willingly comply with your request. Of the particulars of his early life, I have no knowledge — my intimacy with him not having commenced till the year 1796; but from that time to the period of his death, I lived in great familiarity and daily intercourse with him and his excellent brother, the late Mr. James Tobin. The habits of Mr. John Tobin were retired, and his society in general confined to that of a few friends; nor did his profession controul in this respect his natural dispositions. The hours of the day were given to business, but the interests of his mind flowed wholly in a different channel: his ambition was directed to other objects than professional eminence, and the pursuit of wealth had for him no attractions. His leisure hours were devoted to literature, but more particularly to works of wit; and his leading passion was for our earlier drama,

upon which he formed his own taste, and which it was his great ambition to rival in dramatic excellence. This was the main object of his life; and when the business of the office was over, he regularly retired to his own chambers, shut his door against all intruders, and dedicated the rest of the evening to dramatic compositions. In society he took great delight, entering with warmth into subjects of literature, or into the topics of the day, which in his time possessed a more than common interest; and when, as was not unfrequent, his love of truth engaged him in argument, the real excellence of his understanding appeared more in his full and ready application of the arguments of others, than in those which he himself adduced, owing perhaps to his having given but little of his attention to the study of the severer sciences. His disposition was frank and cheerful — his integrity inflexible, and his disinterestedness appeared equally in the greater and the

lesser concerns of life. Above all, he was distinguished by an unaffected scorn of whatever is mean or little-minded, but without any mixture of the austerity which often accompanies this superiority of feeling."

Some years after the poet's death, the elder Mr. Tobin visited his son's grave, over which he caused a small tablet to be erected, with the following inscription.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

JOHN TOBIN, ESQ. OF LINCOLN'S INN,
whose Remains are deposited under
the adjacent Turf.

He died at Sea,
near the Entrance of this Harbour,
in the Month of December
1804,
on his Passage to a milder Climate
in search of better Health,
Aged 35.

That, with an excellent Heart, and a most
amiable Disposition,
He possessed a vigorous Imagination,
and a cultivated Understanding,
His Dramatic Writings
fully evince.

SEQUEL TO THE MEMOIRS.

The success which has uniformly awaited the representation of *The Honey-moon*, is such as almost renders criticism impertinent, and eulogium superfluous. In the first instance, this brilliant popularity might with reason be attributed to the exquisite skill and grace with which the leading characters were sustained by their original representatives; but *The Honey-moon* has been acted in every theatre in the kingdom, and beyond the Atlantic; and under every disadvantage arising from inferior performers, never failed to attract smiles and plaudits from the audience. Amidst all the vacillations of taste and fashion, it has stood the test of many seasons, and still maintains the same eminence: its reputation is no longer of courtesy, but of right;

it is a chartered play: and when a century shall have elapsed, may still transmit the author's name and merits to posterity. It is pleasing to trace, and not unuseful to recal, the first impressions which the production of this comedy created at the actual moment; and to those who were not in the number of its original spectators, the following extracts from the remarks of a cotemporary critic may not be altogether unacceptable.

"This comedy appeared at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane on the 31st of January, where it was highly and deservedly applauded: it may be said to form an epocha in the annals of the drama, by being a modern attempt to revive the manner of writing which prevailed in the sixteenth century. In his plan the author has totally, and (were but common sense our guide) justly disregarded the vaunted unities of time and place; but, for the greater per-

fection of his piece, he neglected that which ought to be sacredly observed in dramatic composition—the unity of action, as it has been named by critics; but which would be more intelligible to the young students, were it rigidly inculcated as the unity of fable. By this it is understood, that there should be but one story; and that every character introduced in a piece should concur in promoting one grand design. Against this rule, also, the author has egregiously erred: instead of one, there are three stories, and as many designs: a design to make a lively coquet play on the feelings of her lover; a design to ridicule and subdue a woman-hater; and a design to correct the haughty and angry temper of a termagant: this last is the principal design; and in the manner of executing it, the appropriate nature and pleasantry of the sentiments, and the flowing and frequently poetical diction of the author, the sterling merit of the play consists. The plan of the

fable is so far from new, that it appears to be an absolute imitation of Shakespeare, not only in the characters of the Duke and Juliana, who are literally Catherine and Petruchio drawn in a different point of view, but of Zamora, who is as truly a transcript of Viola in Twelfth Night. In the management of the principal plan, when the scene changes from the palace to the cottage, we are no less forcibly reminded of *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*, by Beaumont and Fletcher. The imitations, through the whole play, of the authors of that age, are too numerous to be cited, but they are frequently so happily made, and often executed with such an air of originality, that instead of being blemishes they seem to stamp a sterling merit, and to purify the dramatic gold that had so long and so basely been alloyed. *The Honey-moon* possesses another antique novelty: it is chiefly written in blank verse, but interspersed with scraps of prose, which an attentive reader is apt to

suspect the author at first intended to versify. He has managed this peculiarity with so great a knowledge of the blank verse which is proper for the stage, that it possesses so much ease and fluency as not to be perceptible as verse, except to delicate and critical auditors.

"As the poetry of the piece forms one of its striking beauties, to cite a few of the poetical passages may please the reader, or afford him an opportunity of judging, should he differ in opinion. In Act I., Rolando, the woman-hater, is seeking for a simile to a woman's tongue; and his companion asks him —

Count. Have you found it?
Rol. Hum, not exactly; something like a smoke-jack,
For it goes ever without winding up —
But that wears out in a time; there fails the simile.
Next I bethought me of a water-mill;
But that stands still on Sundays: woman's tongue
Needs no reviving Sabbath. And beside,
A mill, to give it motion, waits for grist.

Now, whether she has ought to say or no,
A woman's tongue will go for exercise.
Most earthly things have their similitude,
But woman's tongue is yet incomparable.

"In Act II. Scene 3. Balthazar goes in search of his daughter, and the Count says —

I'll bear you company;
And as the traveller, perplex'd awhile
In the benighted mazes of a forest,
Breaks on a champaign country smooth and level,
And sees the sun shine glorious; so shall you, sir,
Behold a bright close, and a golden end
To this now dark adventure.

"The following is a fine drawn picture of the follies in which the wealthy indulge: it is near the end of the second act.

Who, then, that has taste for happiness,
Would live in a large mansion, only fit
To be a habitation for the winds;
Keep gilded ornaments for dust and spiders;
See every body — care for nobody;
Lose the free use of limbs by being mew'd up

In a close carriage next to being bed-rid,
As if, like mummies, we should fall to pieces
By taking air; and, above all, be pester'd
With those voracious vermin, call'd attendants.

"At the close of the third act the Duke gives the following beautiful picture.

Thus modestly attir'd,
A half-blown rose stuck in thy braided hair,
With no more diamonds than those eyes are made of,
No deeper rubies than compose thy lips,
Nor pearls more precious than inhabit them,
With the pure red and white which that same hand
That blends the rainbow, mingles in thy cheeks.
This well proportion'd form (think not I flatter)
In graceful motion to harmonious sounds,
And thy free tresses dancing in the wind,
Thou'lt fix as much observance as chaste dames
Can meet without a blush."*

That *The Honey-moon* is a fortunate imitation cannot be denied by its most ardent admirers; but the idea of reviving the old

* These remarks are extracted from the Theatrical Inquisitor for 1805.

comedy was no less original than happy, and gives the author an indisputable title to the reputation he has acquired. It has lately been customary to refer to our elder writers as the first and last and only school of dramatic poetry. To say that Shakespeare belonged to that age, is surely sufficient to establish its universal supremacy: but not satisfied with this concession, it is pretended that even his cotemporaries (few of whose productions could be introduced on a modern stage), and even his successors (though they adulterated many of his beautiful productions), all belonged to an order of dramatic intelligences immeasurably removed from the present race of writers, and unapproachable by those of future generations. It is natural to enquire what were the peculiar circumstances of society to which we are to attribute this prescriptive claim to excellence: and the representation of *The Honey-moon* naturally transports the imagination to the poetical court

of Elizabeth, and the *theatrical* metropolis of James. In that dramatic age it is well known that the poet was supremely happy to receive five pounds for his moiety of a play; that the most popular performer thought himself liberally remunerated by a salary of thirty shillings per week; and that, even in the elegant *theater* of Blackfriars, volumes of vapours ascended from the smokers in the pit, whilst the fumes of strong beer issued from the dark and gloomy cells corresponding in design with our boxes, but not like them, alas! graced by the presence of fashion, of elegance, and beauty. We will not animadvert on the custom of crying in the theatre the refreshments provided for the audience*, since the same custom prevails at this day in the Theatre Francois. Nor need we, perhaps, greatly commiserate our play-going forefathers be-

* The money squandered in these refreshments forms a serious article in Prynn's charges against the theatre.—*See Histrio Mastix.*

cause their orchestra was comprized in three fiddles, and its operations often limited to the three flourishes announcing the entrance of the royal Dane or noble Moor, inasmuch as they were thus spared the musical interlude which now deforms the solemn scenes of Macbeth.

In witnessing the rage for spectacle which in our day has almost raised the machinist above the poet or the tragedian, we might perhaps be tempted, with the eloquent Schlegel, to envy rather than pity the squalid penury of their scenical decorations. The blanket curtain might be tolerated, under some circumstances, even in modern times; but no eloquence—no ingenuity can disguise the ludicrous subterfuges for scenical machinery which have drawn forth the animadversions of contemporary critics, and at which Sydney has levelled the keenest satire.*

* Our tragedies and comedies observe rules neither

A still greater drawback was found in the intrusion of spectators on the stage, where, seated on their twelvepenny stools, they interfered with the performers, and sometimes vociferated to the audience.* Surely such indications of coarseness and barbarism cannot be included in the circumstances peculiarly favourable to dramatic perfectibility.

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of honest civility nor skilful poetry: here you shall have Asia on one side, and Afric on the other, and so many other under kingdoms, that the player, when he comes in, must ever begin with telling where he is, or else the tale will not be conceived. Now you shall have three ladies walk to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By and by we hear news of a shipwreck in the same place: then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock. Upon the back of that comes out a hideous monster with fire and smoke, and then the beholders are bound to take it for a cave; while in the meantime two armies fly in, represented with four swords and bucklers, and then, what hard heart will not receive it for a pitched field?—*Defence of poesy.*

* This abuse has been exquisitely ridiculed in Beaumont's comedy of *The Burning Pestle.*

But if, leaving the *Theatre* or the *Globe*, we follow the Bard to his seven o'clock supper at the Mermaid, to the very room where Shakespeare presided — where Jonson, Fletcher, and the lesser satellites, revolved around him: if we contemplate the union in which they lived, the gaiety that prevailed at their simple but convivial repast; we shall be ready to confess that this was indeed a glimpse of Poet-land, such as is not likely to be discovered again.

The drama appears to have then constituted a sort of literary commonwealth, in which men of gentle blood associated on equal terms with men of servile condition. Seceders from the pulpit and the bar, exchanged learning for eloquence; and managers, actors, and authors formed a confederacy, in which petty interests and personal feelings were held subordinate to the common good. Even with poets, not competition but

co-operation was the object. The partnership of Beaumont and Fletcher, the occasional conjunction of Massinger, Ford, Marlow, &c. all illustrate this fundamental principle. There is something pleasing and congenial in the idea of this literary *consortship*, in the interchange of pathos and humour, of wit or eloquence, according to the peculiar bias or talent of the respective colleagues. Accustomed to sit at the same table, whilst they sipped their posset or saw the cup replenished with sack, they sometimes produced comic scenes almost without the intervention of a pen, from the inspiration of the social moment.*

* Methinks the little wit I had is lost
Since I saw you — for wit is like a rest,
Held up at Tennis — which men do the best
With the best gamesters. — What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid — heard words that have been
So nimble — and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one, from whence they came,
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest

In a moral view the advantages resulting from this order of things is equally apparent: between partners the petty jealousies of authors must have been suspended; and it is notorious that these joint-writers seldom took the trouble to identify their respective shares in their literary property. The eminence to which they aspired was local. The theatre was their World, and few attempted, through the medium of the press, to extend their reputation beyond its limits. But with whatever feelings of complacency we may be disposed to contemplate this poetical state of society, it

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Of his dull life. — Then when there had been thrown
Wit able enough to justify the town
For three days past — wit that might warrant be,
For the whole city to talk polishly, ...
'Till that were cancelled, and when that was gone,
We left an air behind us — which alone
Was able to make the two next companies
Right witty, though but downright fools, more wise.
Beaumont's letter to Ben Jonson.

is impossible not to detect in its picturesque features, the homely, though not repulsive expression of poverty: it was necessity that controuled the spirit of egotism: it was to escape from want and desolation that authors coalesced as brothers; mutual hardships formed the cement of their union, and care and toil suspended if they could not extinguish the dreams of fame.

Although the nascent drama, like a little rocky domain, might be protected by indigence from invasion and dissension, from limitation and corruption; it may be doubted how far the federal principle of coalition was favourable to the higher efforts of human intellect. The gem is imbedded in a solitary cell — genius requires space and insulation for full development.

The learning of the age is another favourite theme with its panegyrists — but was not the theatre the resort of the *people?*

Did scholars and sages predominate in the audience? On the contrary, if we may credit cotemporary writers, it was the Theatre that was the academy, and that gradually refined and improved the audience.* Much stress is laid on royal patronage, but it was no courtly wand that raised in one year three theatres: it was no sovereign's mandate that cleared the Bear gardens, and attracted its frequenters to more refined and liberal entertainments. It is true that plays were some-

* In his Apology for Players, Heywood, with some plausibility, ascribes to the influence of the stage, the diffusion of information and the improvement of taste, "You see to what excellence our refined English is brought, that in these days we are ashamed of that *Euphemy* and eloquence, which within these 60 years, the best tongues in the land were proud to pronounce. Plays have made the ignorant more apprehensive, taught the unlearned knowledge of many famous *histories*; instructed such as cannot read, in the discovery of all our English chronicles. What man have you now who cannot discourse of any notable thing recorded even from William the Conqueror, nay from the landing of *Bruit*, until this day?"

times performed at court, but what royal personage ever deigned to visit even the Rose or the Fortune, which were privileged theatres? What high-born beauty condescended to sit even in the Lord's box, which was appropriated to the few persons of distinction who attended a public play? To what then should we attribute that affluence of talent,—the power, the supremacy of our elder dramatists? To *liberty*, and the energy it inspires;—to *success*, and the ardour it creates;—to the consciousness that they were progressively extending their influence with the public *;—and to the proud conviction, that they were at least recompensed by its grateful attachment. To the dramatist of those days, some theatre was always open.† The repre-

* In two years, it is stated, that two play-houses were rebuilt, the Fortune and the Red Bull; and a third (the Whitefriars) erected.

† No doubt they did not act every day, and several of these theatres were very small, and, probably, not

sentation of a new play was attended with little additional expence, and the performers readily concurred in lending it their zealous support. The poet who failed in his first effort was not precluded from a second or a third attempt, and by repeatedly exercising his talents, was finally enabled to exert them with success. Few of the writers of that age arrived at eminence till after frequent trials and even reiterated defeats: but how different such trials, such discipline, such experience, from the slow revolving years of doubt and suspence, the unmitigated—the everlasting penance of tantalization and disappointment. May we not venture to believe that it was from the

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much better fitted up than Marionette booths. Still, however, they served to call forth the fertility of those writers who possessed, or supposed they possessed, dramatic talents; for every theatre must have had its peculiar repertory, as the pieces were either not printed at all, or, at least, not till long after their composition.

Schlegel.

privilege of holding constant communication with the public, rather than from any romantic features of society in the 17th century, that the poet derived his strength, his felicity, his excellence? and that the degeneracy of the modern theatre originates in other causes than diffused cultivation and the progress of knowledge and refinement. It is derogatory to the drama (of which the foundation is laid in human nature) to suppose that, like the masque or pageant of the Gothic era, it derived its glory from a system of manners and customs which have long since perished. There is no human power by which the spirit of a departed age can be recalled from oblivion. The progress of society, however eccentric and vacillating, is regulated by certain immutable principles, and, even when it appears to retrograde, is never observed to retrace its former track, or to resume its primitive aspect. But admitting that the recent discoveries of knowledge

and science have been unproductive to poetry *, must it follow, that they have encroached on its original domain, and that the emanations of reason and philosophy, like a volcanic flood, have converted to ruin and waste the once brilliant scenes of passion and imagination, and swept to oblivion the ancient land-mark of nature? By what agencies shall the Chemist decompose the moral principles essential to dramatic feeling? By what collision has the electric rod divested fancy of her potent spells? Can the telescopic glimpse of distant worlds abstract the heart from its own little vibratory system, those unceasing changes and hourly revolutions of thought and feeling, in which man becomes to man the first object?

* Many branches of human knowledge have, since that time, been cultivated to a greater extent, but merely those branches which are unproductive to poetry. Chemistry, mechanics, manufactures, and rural and political economy, will never enable a man to become a poet.

Schlegel's Lectures.

Abstractedly considered, the progress of civilization, by multiplying the sources of intellectual pleasure, should naturally increase the aptitudes and sensibilities to the dramatic art. There is something in the very stillness and security of polished society, that creates a constant necessity for moral excitement, and that where the mental energies are not exhausted, must give a more powerful impulse to the imagination. The contemplation of action is to none more delightful than to those who are circumscribed in their sphere of activity, and who submit unwillingly to the consciousness of restraint and limitation. Experience justifies the assertion, that the conception of horrors may not only be acceptable to an age of elegance and refinement, but that, when unaccompanied by circumstances of disgust, they often inspire intense delight; but though candour must acquit science and literature of having exercised an anti-dramatic influence on society, it is impossible to dispute the fact,

that the modern poet has been dispossessed of the privileges and immunities allotted to his predecessors, and that he has to lament the deprivation of that unentrammelled freedom which, under the nominal despotism of a Master of the Revels, the elder Bard was permitted to enjoy. Nor has he merely to complain of the forfeiture of those dear and invaluable privileges — he might appeal from the injustice which renders him amenable to laws from whose protection he is excluded:—he might protest against the tyranny which first enslaves and then degrades him—which forbids him to emulate the elder dramatist, and then stigmatises him with inferiority and contempt: but these are trifling evils, compared with the loss of public esteem and self-respect. He is not only taught to believe that he belongs to an inferior order of dramatists, but even to a degenerate age, whose suffrage is not to be obtained by merit, and whose applause he can scarcely purchase but with his own contempt. Sen-

timents such as these are perpetually echoed by critics and declaimers; and in whatever measure they may obtain belief, must operate to the depreciation of talent, the extinction of energy, and the depravation of taste.

It is eminently unfortunate for the progress of any art, when the standard of excellence is in a style completely opposed to the rules prescribed to living students. Something like this may be observed to arise from the contrast exhibited by such old plays as are still acted and applauded with the artificial mechanism invariably exacted (in fable and incidents) from living cotemporaries. With the exception, however, of Shakespeare, the great and universal interpreter of nature, the revival of our elder masters (for which a strong inducement is offered in their exemption from litigious criticism) are seldom found to engage the affections of the public; and

for the obvious reason, that the writers of a distant period cannot address themselves to our sympathies like one who has dwelt amongst us, who is familiar with our idioms and impressions, and by a sort of felicitous sub-intelligence, is capable of explaining our secret sentiments. Although this remark applies rather to comedy than tragedy, which, being founded on human sufferings, is less dependent on local or temporary impressions, there still remains, even with the latter, a barrier to intimacy in the antiquated language, or almost obsolete allusions, of a departed age. Shakespeare alone has triumphed over time. The venerable fathers of our dramatic literature are unquestionably entitled to every sentiment of gratitude and veneration, but this generous devotion degenerates into illiberal superstition when it exacts the sacrifice of our living cotemporaries, by whom those mighty masters of the spell should rather be invoked as tutelary protectors.

To establish the opinion that there exists a moral necessity for the degeneracy of modern dramatists, is to pronounce a sentence of ostracism against national genius:—it is to blight the laurel that should invest the poet's brow:—it is to break the tripod which enthusiasm had consecrated, and to lay open the sanctuary of honour and immortality. Yet in contemplating the powerful energies which have been developed in other departments of literature, who can resist the persuasion, that the spirit of the drama also hovers over our sphere, ready to evolve from the kindred elements of society, its new and beautified and intelligent creations. But to realize this expectation, two changes are necessary in the public mind, and to the desire that *good plays* should be produced, must be added the conviction, that *good plays* will be successful.

The history of the modern Theatre strongly

exemplifies the remark, that a bitter foe is less to be deprecated than a lukewarm friend. In the days of Prynne and Collier, when the stage was exposed to the combined attacks of scholars and moralists, it flourished; for those attacks were repelled by its partizans —its champions — its defenders. In the present day, when it commands the homage of rank, wealth, and literature, when its distinguished professors are eagerly welcomed to the circles of elegance and fashion, there is an apathetic indifference to its vital interests—a total absence of enthusiasm and attachment. According to the levelling principle recently established with regard to public amusements, a sagacious quadruped — a tumbler — a juggler, is authorized for a season to counteract the most accomplished actor. Not only is Shakespeare travestied, but the national theatre at once burlesqued and supplanted by scenical exhibitions, which cannot but vitiate, and must ultimately destroy the public taste. But let

not knowledge, science, or literature, be charged with an outrage, of which the toleration demonstrates that we are still in a state of imperfect civilization. These innovations on the legitimate drama are the more to be lamented, as from the enormous expence attached to regular establishments, our national theatre requires the most strenuous support; and, to avert the ruinous consequences of neglect, is unavoidably compelled to adopt a temporizing system, which degrades its character, and defeats its object.

It is not to knowledge, to taste, to moral feeling, but to their adversaries, to prejudice, to egotism, to levity and apathy, that we must attribute the indifference to our national Theatre, which, as the primitive school of poetry, of eloquence, or refinement, claims respect and protection: to its existence we owe a large and precious portion of our national literature: to its tutelary influence we perhaps owe the

brightest star of modern times, the only and universal Shakespeare. The theatre is in a manner the representative of society, a nursery of various talents: and as an asylum for various arts, is singularly qualified to call forth the energies and develope the moral character of a free people. To the poet the theatre is as the shrine of Mecca, the eastern goal to which he constantly directs his glance, or addresses his secret prayers, in his pilgrimage through the desert. At its name a stronger pulsation rushes to his heart: he sees in it patronage, friendship, and affection—from its influence, he anticipates the gratitude, the sympathy, the attachment of his country.

The system which *circumstances* rather than individuals have established in modern times, is, to the poet, worse than penury or scorn, or censure or contempt: it is the blank of silence, the darkness of despair. It is not often that a mind of poetical sensi-

bility is endowed with the faculty of stoical endurance: and there are men of exalted souls, and lofty aspirations, who would not descend to meanness — who could not stoop to debasement — to purchase the boon of immortality. By such the path of obliquity will be left to men who are only solicitous for temporary interests, and incapable of inspiring a permanent sentiment. The sanctuary is first polluted, and then deserted.

Dramatic biography is generally the record of imprudence and misfortune: even of our elder bards little is known, but that they lived in indigence, and died in obscurity. If we refer to the later era of the restoration, we shall find the persecuted Dryden— the ill-fated Lee — and the exquisitely-pathetic Otway: but it is consoling to reflect, that to all of these it was permitted to snatch some gleams of hope—some transient moments of happiness. The most unfortu-

nate was not, like the author of *The Honey-moon*, condemned to wear out existence in silent conflicts and unavailing regrets — his most gloomy hours might be gilded by visions of fame, and their last pangs soothed by the reflection, that he had not lived and suffered in vain!

THE CONCLUSION.

It remains to notice such of Tobin's plays as have been represented since *The Honey-moon*. In 1806 *The Faro Table* was for the second time read in the green room, but after every preparation had been made for its representation, (dresses being provided for the principal performers)*, it was

* Amongst these, was one of the few survivors of the school of Garrick, the late Miss Pope, an actress of whom it was the rare privilege, during almost half a century, to continue to advance in the estimation of the public, and, with added years, to enjoy extended fame! In her earlier efforts, she had to measure her strength with for-

suddenly withdrawn, and *The Curfew* substituted in its place. The success of that

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midable opponents; but in her later and original characters, she was, confessedly, without a rival; and, in the opinion of those who have witnessed and enjoyed them, must ever remain without an equal. It would be little to say, of a woman who was exemplary in every relation of life, that her reputation was unblemished; and if, in prudence, she baffled calumny, she equally disarmed envy by her benevolence: her manners were characterised by frankness and simplicity;—she never studied effect, nor betrayed the slightest degree of pretension; but she was superior to the affectation of concealing those rare talents which diffuse exhilaration through every circle, and which equally delighted her elder or younger associates. Her principles were never sacrificed to politeness; nor did she conciliate favour at the expence of truth. It was scarcely possible to meet her as an acquaintance without wishing to attach her as a friend. If the gay and the prosperous were charmed with her animation, the melancholy and the unfortunate were soothed by her kindness, or animated by her piety. The example of Miss Pope might alone silence the prejudices which once prevailed against her profession. To such a woman, rank could not have added dignity; nor was fortune necessary to extort respect; even the celebrity which offers homage to talents, falls short of the veneration inspired by genuine virtue!

play ensured attention to the author's remaining pieces. The opera of *The Fisherman* was accepted at Drury Lane, and that of *Attraction* at Covent Garden; of both these pieces, the music was actually composed, but irretrievably lost in the similar calamity of fire, which befel the sister theatres. *The School for Authors* was, in 1808, performed by the Covent Garden company at the Haymarket theatre with great applause. Shortly after Mr. James Tobin leaving England, no further notice was taken of his brother's manuscripts, till after the re-establishment of Drury Lane theatre, when he addressed the following letter to Mr. Whitbread.

"Sir, Nevis, 1813.

"The interest which you have lately taken in the affairs of Drury Lane theatre, induces me to address you respecting two pieces, which have been for many years considered as accepted by the proprietors of the

old theatre; they are the productions of my late lamented brother, who when alive had some reason to complain of neglect, from those, who have since his death profited so much by his labours. *The Fisherman*, an opera, has been several times altered and adapted to the stage; and was to have been brought out before I quitted England in 1809. *The Faro Table* was read in the green room, many years before that period, and was on the point of being played, when it was discovered, that it was a satire on Lady ——. After the death of this lady, it was again brought forward. I was sent for from the country to attend the rehearsals; it was announced in the bills; and two days before its intended representation, an election for Westminster having taken place, I was told it would be considered as a satire on another Lady, —— and the play was suppressed. Now, Sir, should there be no more peeresses or ladies of quality standing in the way, I

may justly require, that this piece, which I can venture to say will not disgrace the theatre, may be brought forward; and I have applied to you, being at this distance ignorant who are the acting managers at Drury Lane. I must refer you for particulars to Mr. Wroughton, to whose exertions the public and myself are much indebted for the performance of *The Honeymoon* and *The Curfew*.

"I remain, Sir, with respect, &c."

It was not till November 1816, that *The Faro Table*, under the title of *The Guardians* *, was performed at Drury Lane,

* It is painful to state the fact, that although this comedy was acted nine nights successively with decided applause, the customary remuneration was withheld from the author's representative, the Relict of Mr. James Tobin. Since this work has been in the press, the *Fisherman* has unexpectedly been produced at Drury-lane theatre, under the auspices of Mr. Elliston, who, as the original duke d'Aranza, is justly to be considered as patron of Tobin's fame; and, to the well-wishers of

—*twenty years* after its first acceptance. During that interval, various changes had occurred to those once connected with its eventful history; of the performers originally studied by the author, not one remained to take the allotted part; of the friendly critics, accustomed to sit in judgment over the author's manuscripts in Barnard's Inn, not one was present. And to the melancholy impression produced by the author's fate, was added that of his excellent brother, who, in 1815, had closed a life

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the drama, it must be pleasing to know, that this long-neglected opera was *spontaneously* sought, *accepted*, and *protected*, with a zeal and ability never to be forgotten by the friends and admirers of the lamented author. That the cold reception of this piece, during the few nights of representation, corresponded little with the impressions previously received of its merits by men of acknowledged talents and taste, is undoubtedly a subject of deep regret; but these partial feelings of disappointment have been mitigated by the sentiments which *honourable* and *liberal* treatment must always inspire in candid minds — but which, in the present instance, have unquestionably been heightened by the *force of contrast*.

devoted to activity, to usefulness, and beneficence. Hitherto Mr. James Tobin has been mentioned only in connection with the poet, of whom he was uniformly the adviser, the patron, and the friend; but he possessed individual claims to distinction, in honourable singularity of character, and undeviating uprightness of conduct. With a heart naturally susceptible of the most ardent feelings, he had early acquired that self-command which fits its possessor for the important and austere duties of human life; and with sympathies and affections never to be systematised to indifference, he submitted without a murmur to privation and disappointment. Much as he despised luxury, and severely as he condemned convivial indulgence, he had an exquisite relish for the pleasures of conversation, and the endearments of domestic society; nor was he ever known to renounce a friend, although by his sincerity, he often hazarded the forfeiture of a friendship. From the candour which

dwelt in his own breast, he naturally expected to recognize the same quality in others; the love of truth was his prevailing passion; and it was remarked by one who had from childhood known him, that Imagination could not conceive the situation in which he would have been tempted to renounce his self-respect, or sacrifice his principles. Of his capacities for the tender affections, none could doubt who knew with what almost unexampled constancy he had been devoted to the interests of a brother, whose early death he continued to deplore, to the latest moment of his existence. Not even the influence of time prevailed over his regrets; nor, till he formed a nearer and more endearing connexion, did he resume his native cheerfulness. It is remarkable that the qualities of his mind and heart were more fully developed, under circumstances which should seem calculated to stifle moral feeling,—in a situation, abstractedly

considered, the most uncongenial to his habits and sympathies,—in a spot exhibiting the utmost misery and degradation,—the polluted soil of slavery, divided between the oppressed and the oppressor. It is unnecessary to enter into the disgraceful details of those illegal, though unpunished cruelties, which, during his superintendance of his father's plantation at Nevis, brought his conduct more immediately before the public. It will be more pleasing to contemplate the example of energy and benevolence which he constantly offered to imitation.

Amongst other plans of usefulness, Mr. Tobin was preparing materials for a work on colonial policy, in which he hoped to demonstrate the necessity of correcting the abuses incident to the administration of British justice in the West Indies.*

* Experience proves, that the benefits of the British constitution cannot be communicated to a land of

An avowed enemy to cruelty and oppression, he contemplated with delight those prospects of emancipation, of which the progressive improvement of society held out the most sacred assurance. To prepare the slave for future freedom and independence, was the object to which he constantly directed his exertions. Accustomed to devote himself to the welfare of others, he watched with almost paternal solicitude, over the welfare of those committed to his direction; nor was it more strenuously his aim to lessen the hardships of this numerous community, than by calling forth their faculties and affections, to elevate them in the scale of human beings. The opinion of the world had no

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slavery. In vain are juries impannelled for the cognizance of crimes committed by the planter against the negro; a verdict of *acquittal* is almost the necessary consequence of the corrupt state of society. The trials of Huggins at Nevis corroborate this fact.

influence on his upright mind; and never was his own domestic happiness alloyed, but by the conviction that there existed misery, which he wanted the power to alleviate. When this reflection was suspended, he enjoyed, in his busy, yet peaceful home, a felicity rarely allotted to human existence. The deprivation of sight, so generally considered as one of the most afflictive of human calamities, scarcely threw one shade over his habitual cheerfulness; and by creating a new and endearing interest in the ordinary relations of life, it even seemed to exalt his capacities for mental gratification: with the eyes of his wife, or of his children, he continued his scientific researches, and still delighted to hold communication with nature: every hour brought its allotted duty—its appropriate enjoyment; and, in receiving assistance, he dispensed instruction and happiness.

At no period of existence had he

courted praise, or deprecated censure: he asked not to be popular,—he aspired to be useful;—the boon was granted: and with this conviction he would have been satisfied: but in the country which, to its immortal honour, had upheld the cause of the oppressed African against the European oppressor, the voluntary services of Mr. James Tobin could not pass unnoticed, and his manly conduct obtained the esteem and confidence of the most enlightened advocates of humanity and truth. At the instance of a Prince* who felt that philanthropy could shed a brighter lustre over royalty, he received a spontaneous public acknowledgment — the more grateful to his feelings, as it appeared to pledge the continuance of those exertions from which alone he could anticipate a final triumph. Amidst perils and persecutions, he stood firm and unappalled; his

* His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester offered this tribute to Mr. Tobin at a meeting of the African Institution, 1813.

spirit shrunk not from the conflict; but the unremitting exertions of his mind wore down his frame: the distresses to which owing to a state of warfare (*) he saw the island exposed, called forth efforts of which his life became the sacrifice. But although he was not permitted to witness the triumph of that cause, to which all the faculties of his soul were consecrated, he has left to his wife — to his children — the consoling reflection, that his labours must have essentially contributed to its accomplishment; and that, whilst truth, probity, and benevolence shall continue to inspire respect, the memory of James Tobin can never be consigned to ungrateful oblivion.

* During the American war.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO

THE DRAMAS.

IN presenting the following dramas to the public, it is as unnecessary as it would be unpleasing to offer any criticism on the works of the lamented author.

The literary character of Tobin is already fixed on a permanent basis. Amongst his cotemporaries it might not be difficult to mention authors possessing superior powers of pathos and humour, more fortunate in creating interest, or awakening sympathy: but it was reserved for Tobin to catch the spirit of our early dramatists, and in some degree to claim participation with their clas-

sical privileges. On this distinction is founded his right to eminence and fame; and it is worthy of remark, that although he had studied with peculiar felicity the great masters of the age of Shakespeare, he escapes the charge of mannerism and affectation. It is not precisely Beaumont or Fletcher, or Massinger, that he copies, although he writes like one who is intimately conversant with their language, and who has insensibly imbibed their opinions and sentiments. To originality of character, he has not established his pretensions. Cut off in the flower of his days, and almost at the moment when he had discovered where his peculiar talent resided, he can scarcely be considered as having reached the full maturity of his genius, or as having perfectly developed in his mind its latent capabilities of excellence. Had he been permitted to survive the season of mortification and disappointment, there can be little doubt, but that he would

have restored to the theatre many of those humourous personages of the elder comedy, whom the costume of their times has excluded from the modern stage. In his earlier productions there often appears a driftless energy, a lively but vacillating fancy, a perpetual struggle between native taste and factitious experience.

The fragment of the tragedy presented in this volume will sufficiently demonstrate that his first aspirations were of a more exalted nature than he was afterwards permitted to cherish. Although the rejection of *The Curfew* evidently checked his flow of fancy, it prevented not the production of *The Indians*, which, however unsuitable to representation, demands to be rescued from oblivion. The opera of *Yours or Mine* has been acted in an altered form at Covent Garden. Of the *Fisherman*, which completes the collection, mention will be made in another place. It

remains to be observed, that there still exist some minor pieces from the same pen, which, in the opinion of good judges, are well entitled to the honour of representation.

ANALYSIS,

BY

JOHN TOBIN,

OF

LA GITANILLA DE MADRID,

(The Gypsey of Madrid.)

COMEDIA FAMOSA DE

DON ANTONIO DE SOLIS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON JUAN.	JUANA.
PRECIOSA.	SANCHO.
MALDONADO.	DON PEDRO.
DON ALONZO.	FABIO.
DOÑA ISABEL.	MARTIN.
DIEGO.	JULIO.
DON HENRIQUE.	GITANOS.

Musica Accompanamiento.

This dramatic sketch is inserted, partly as a specimen of the author's style and spirit of analyzation, and partly because it affords a proof that, in 1804, the author despaired of seeing *The Honey-moon* represented.

THE GYPSEY OF MADRID.

ACT I.

Enter Don Juan and Julio with a Miniature Picture.

Julio. Como tan poco gustosa
Fue la causa de venirte
Alla dexaste al partirte
El retrato de tu Eposa

Don Juan. Quedose, Julio, olvidado
Pero yo pienso que ha sido
En este Caso el Olvido
Diligencia del Cuidado.

Jul. No es menester que publique
Tu lengua, que eres ingrato.

Don Juan. Dexa esso. This picture I must give to Don Henriquez, that by means of it he may the better follow my bride.

Julio. To Don Henriquez, signor? The picture of Isabel?

Don Juan. Come nearer to me, and you shall know the history of it. You know that I came to court—

Julio. True, sir, in obedience to your father you left Salamanca for Seville; about which time, attentive, as he said, to your happiness, he engaged to marry you at this court to Donna Isabel de Oviedo, your cousin, whose picture you just now held in your hand. After receiving a thousand letters from your father, you resolved to come here, but determined not to marry the lady. Your friend Don Henrique accompanied you from Salamanca.

Don Juan gives a long account of his having fallen violently in love with a gypsey since his arrival at Seville, (which the more confirmed his dislike to the match which his father had made for him,) but that she treated him with disdain: that he had prevailed on his friend Don Henrique to personate him with Isabella, which he might easily do, as none of the lady's family had ever seen him, and his father was not expected for some days: that Don Henrique accordingly, carrying with him the letters which Juan had received from his father, had introduced himself, five days since, to Isabella and her family, as Don Juan, and in that capacity was making love to the lady. Don Juan then declares his reason for having turned gypsey, that he might the better pursue his new mistress.

Julio declares his readiness to join his master in the scheme.

Enter Preciosa as a gypsey and Juana. The Preciosa and Don Juan converse: she still proves disdainful. Julio makes loves to Juana. The Preciosa and Juana depart. A short conversation between Juan and Julio.

(*I think a scene may be here introduced between Juan and Henrique, in which the latter may relate the progress he has made in the family.*)

Enter Maldonado, an old gypsey. Sancho, Diego, Preciosa, and Juana, as gypsies. Juan and Julio are introduced, and accepted as gypsies. It is agreed that Juan shall be called Andres, and Julio, Hernando. Maldonado orders a couple of dresses to be brought for them. Juan, in changing his dress, lets fall the picture of Isabella, which Julio takes up. Preciosa gets it from him. A conversation between Juan and Preciosa, in which the latter accuses him of having another mistress, which he denies: she goes out with Juana: Juan follows her; and Julio also departs.

(*Perhaps the scene between Juan and Henriquez would better come in here.*)

The following is a bad scene altogether. Query, if not better to make Don Pedro fall from his mule on his journey to Madrid.—(Introduce scene from the Honey-moon.)

Enter Don Pedro and Martin his valet. Pedro

observes that Don Alonzo, the sister of Isabella, lives somewhere thereabouts, but that he does not mean to visit them without his carriage and retinue. He sees the gypsies, and inquires of them the way to Don Diego Alvarado's, his friend, whom he is going to visit: but as Don Diego makes no part in the play, it might perhaps be better for him to inquire at once the way to Alonzo's. The gypsies go out; as do Pedro and Martin after a short conversation.

Don Henriquez and Fabio enter. Don Henriquez confesses his passion for Isabella, whom he has wooed in the name of Don Juan. Don Alonzo enters; and Fabio should, I imagine, depart, as Alonzo communicates to Henriquez his attachment to the Preciosa, and departs. Scene between Donna Isabel and Henriquez, by which it appears they are mutually enamoured; but the lady is fearful of having been too forward in declaring her passion. Whilst they are talking —

Enter Don Alonzo, Preciosa, and Juana. They admire the beauty of Preciosa: she tells the fortune of Isabel; and in dancing lets the picture fall, which Isabel takes up; they all become jealous but Henriquez: the act finishes.

ACT II.

Enter Juan and Julio as gypsies. Julio informs Juan (which it appears afterwards he has learnt from Juana) that Preciosa has compared the picture with the original, and is convinced of his inconstancy.

Preciosa and Juana pass over the stage, affecting not to see Juan and Julio, who address them: Preciosa accuses Juan of falsehood; he attempts to defend himself; among other things says he never saw the lady: Julio proposes that, to clear up the matter, they should all go to Isabella's, when the truth would appear from her conduct to Don Juan. They go out.

Scene between Henriquez and Isabella: she accuses him of having given her picture to Preciosa; he defends himself as well as he is able: says that he lost the picture, and that probably it was found by the gypsies.

Isabella is informed that the gypsey is without. Enter Preciosa, Don Juan, Julio, and Juana. Preciosa relates that Andres (Juan's assumed name among the gypsies) pretended to be her lover, but that the admiration he had expressed of the beauty of Isabella had awakened her jealousy: Isabella

satisfies her upon that point, and in return requests to know where she got the picture that she had let drop. Preciosa informs her that Andres had found it, and brought it to her: this agrees with Henriquez's story, and all parties are satisfied. The arrival of Don Pedro is now announced: Henriquez pretends that he wishes, before he sees his father, to have some particular conversation with Isabel, and they retire.

Enter Don Pedro and Martin. He discovers Juan and Julio; inquires why they appear in the habit of gypsies; the Preciosa informs him that the guests who are met to celebrate the marriage of his son had amongst them undertaken to play a comedy of Cervantes, called La Gitanida; this satisfies him, and he proposes to go in with them, and see the bride; they excuse themselves on the ground that she knows nothing of their intentions, and that they mean to surprize her with their performance. Isabella enters on one side, saying that Don Juan has left her in great confusion, and promised to return immediately. Pedro tells the gypsies he does not wish to interrupt their design: they depart. Isabel comes forward: Pedro talks of having conversed with his son in the character of a gypsey: Isabella is puzzled (jealous, in learning that Juan had departed in a gypsey's dress):

he requests that Alonzo might be informed of his arrival. They go out.

Enter Alonzo and Fabio. Alonzo talks of his passion for Preciosa: Preciosa and Juana enter. Preciosa inquires of Alonzo respecting Don Juan's coming to Madrid; this renews his jealousy; he informs her of Don Juan's having come to marry his sister; she inquires how it happens that his sister should not know him; Alonzo is confounded, but before she can explain herself Don Juan and Julio enter on one side, and Don Henriquez on the other: a general confusion takes place, and the act ends without any of the parties coming to an explanation.

ACT III.

Enter Juan, dressed as himself, and Julio as a gypsey; Juan declares his determination to quit Madrid, after having explained to Preciosa the whole of his story: she enters; he renews his suit; she is still disdainful, and the more to discourage him, gives a very long picture of the life of a gypsey. Juana enters to inform them that Juan's father is coming in search of him; he declares he must have an interview with his friend (Henriquez), and departs, as does Preciosa: a short scene of courtship between Julio and Juana: they go out.

Alonzo and Fabio enter; the former declaring his determination to have an interview with the Preciosa: they hear a noise without, and retire: the gypsies enter, and seat themselves; a conversation takes place between two of them, as to the occasion of their meeting: Maldonado and Preciosa enter; they all rise and present him a seat: Maldonado declares it to be their intention that night to quit Madrid, and arranges their plan of operations for plunder previous to quitting it: he settles that himself and Julio will make one party: the gypsies all go out, leaving Preciosa: Alonzo enters; after a short conversation, Preciosa, to avoid him, goes out; he pursues her.

Enter Henriquez and Ines. She informs him that her mistress is very anxious to have an interview with him in the garden. (The scene represents it.) Ines goes out to bring her mistress. Henriquez informs the audience of the aukwardness of his situation, as that was the spot where he had appointed to meet Don Juan. He retires on hearing voices. Maldonado and Julio enter. The latter recognizes the house of Donna Isabella, and is fearful: Maldonado encourages him, saying he has a secret in his possession, which, if they are taken, will bring them off. They go out, Isabella enters, and as she is explaining to Henriquez the confusion he has caused in the house, she hears the key of the garden turn, and thinking it to be her brother, goes out. Henriquez retires to the back of the stage. Alonzo and Preciôsa enter through the garden door: after a short conversation between them, Don Juan enters, observing, it is the spot where he was to meet Henriquez. Alonzo speaks to him, mistaking him for his valet Fabio, and departs. Don Juan and Preciosa: she accuses him of coming there to meet Isabella: he recriminates on having found her with Alonzo. Henriquez comes forward, and he and Don Juan have no sooner recognized each other, than Don Pedro enters in search of his son; finding other persons

there, he calls for lights. Alonzo, Isabel, and Ines, enter with lights. Pedro recognizes Don Henriquez, and addresses him by his name. Before they can explain, a cry within of thieves—Martin enters, dragging in Maldonado and Julio. The former requests to be heard: he produces a box with a picture and a trinket, from which, and a paper found with it, the Preciosa is discovered to be the sister of Alonzo and Isabella. Juan confesses the cheat he had put upon Isabella. The Preciosa is united to him, and Isabella gives her hand to Henriquez.

ACT III.

Enter Juan and Julio, dressed as gypsies.

Juan. Been at Donna Isabella's?

Julio. Yes, sir.

Juan. Impossible! how could she have known the picture was intended for Isabella?

Julio. She knew no such thing; she went there as a fortune-teller, but finding that the lady exactly resembled the picture, she was immediately persuaded that she was your real mistress, and became jealous accordingly.

Juan. And where did you learn all this?

Julio. Of her companion, Juana; but yonder they come.

Juan. What the devil shall I say to her?

Julio. Nothing, sir, let her begin: always let an angry woman have her full flow, and take her when she begins to ebb.

Juan. Stand aside, and let them pass.

Enter Preciosa and Juana.

Preciosa. Let us appear not to observe them, and pass. [*Juan and Julio come forward and detain them.*

Juan. Nay, it is impossible but you must see us.

Preciosa. Let me pass, signor; one is not obliged to notice every thing one sees; 'twould be a terrible tax upon one's courtesy.

Juan. But you won't go without speaking to me?

Prec When you have discovered a man's falsehood, to have spoken to him once, is sufficient.

Juan. When you accuse a man of falsehood, you should at least hear his defence: the meanest criminal has that privilege allowed him before condemnation?

Prec. Well, to the picture then — I have seen the lady.

Juan. So did I never, by heavens!

Prec. How! you never saw the original of that picture!

Juan. Never, as I hope to be saved.

Prec. And the lady perhaps never saw you?

Juan. Not that I know of.

Prec. Bravo! and you'll maintain, perhaps, that I never saw the lady?

Juan. You may have been deceived; there is a mystery about that picture, which I cannot at present unriddle: but by the faith and honour, that lady, whoever she may be, is as ignorant of my person as I am of her's; and that we therefore must be perfectly indifferent to each other.

Prec. So it seems, by your wearing her so near your heart?

Julio. A mode strikes me of satisfying the lady without danger to my master. With permission of the company, I have a proposal to make that may suit both parties.

Juan. Speak, Julio.

Prec. Well, what have you to say?

It will not appear surprising, that the author of the *Honey-moon* should have relinquished the attempt to adapt *La Gitanilla* to the English stage, an attempt to which he could alone be incited by discouragement and despondence.

THE TRAGEDY,

A FRAGMENT.

Written in 1794.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MONTANO.
VALLETORT.
VASQUEZ.
ALMAR.

URANE.
BRIANTHE.
CHILD.

A FRAGMENT.

SCENE THE FIRST.

MONTANO *and* VASQUEZ.

Mont. Come near me, Vasquez,
And let me pour into thy faithful ear
The inward thoughts which prey upon my quiet.
You must remember 'tis scarce six months past
I went to wed Salerno's beauteous daughter,
And Valletort was with me, then a boy,
A pretty beardless stripling in my train,
Such as your delicate fastidious dames
Are hugely taken with: me she mispriz'd,
Though much I play'd the fool, ogled and sigh'd,
And bow'd my nature to obsequious homage;
Yet most contemptuously she scorn'd my proffers,
And on this youthful truant turn'd her eye;
Which he observing, took her in the mood,
And wedded privately.

Vasq. What follow'd this?

Mont. Her father died soon after,
Bequeathing her no portion but his curses;
Whilst I, though inly griev'd as much as he,
With smooth demeanor pass'd the matter off,
Reckless of further question.

Vasq. 'Twas provoking.

Mont. 'Twas wormwood to my pride: as for my love,
In the warm foldings of some kinder fair
I could have bought oblivion. But to be scorn'd!
What is there in this smooth-fac'd Ganymede
To shame my functions in a woman's eye,
That he should glitter like a star; whilst I
Look'd black as pitchy night! What, am not I
Gifted with all dimensions of a man;
Voice, action, reason, thought, as well as he?
Passions that rise as high, and cry as loud
For quick enjoyment; appetites as keen,
And hopes as daring? Ay, more deadly daring;
For who shall cheat me of the sweet revenge
Which now dawns dimly on my troubled soul.

Vasq. Your rage transports you, sir.

Mont. I thought 'twas coyness—
Woman's stale artifice, to keep us warm
And keen in the pursuit: and whilst, forsooth,

I fondly staid the ripening of her life,
This boy of smoother phraseology
Breath'd on her neck one am'rous melting sigh,
And, quick as eyes could meet, or hands encounter,
Quick as the motion of a falling star,
Told his soft tale, and rushed into her arms.
Vasq. You brood too much upon it.
Mont. What! dost think
I am compact of such dull-mettled stuff,
Calmly to see the pride of all my hopes
Torn from me, and not vow a great revenge?
Vasq. But how to master it?
Mont. Therein I must have
Thy counsel. For a while he sojourns here,
To move his interest with our senators;
Whereto, as counting much upon my friendship,
And knowing I am gracious in their eyes,
He hath solicited mine aid. His wife
Attends him here.
Vasq. What out of this, my lord?
Mont. She doats upon him with that trem'lous love,
Which, where 'tis deepest rooted shakes the most;
And whilst abroad he plays the truant, sits
And images in fond solicitude
The causes of his absence. If she but knew
He left th' encircling harbour of her arms,

To ride at large on love's unhallow'd sea—

Vasq. Is't so indeed?

Mont. Thou know'st Rodone?

Vasq. The cunning'st shrew in Venice.

Mont. She has hook'd him:
Made fools of all his senses, that he thinks
Her virtue more transcendant than her beauty.
For, like a skilful mistress of her trade,
With a soft coy reserve, and delicate frankness,
She drew him on, and madden'd so his sense
With wav'ring looks, and wishes half express'd,
So play'd with his young fancy, and beguil'd
His green experience, that the fool is caught:
Nay, he has diced so deeply with her friends,
Right skilful in their calling, that, his means
Exhausted, she has prodigally fed;
So that she holds him by a double bond,
A debtor to her bounty as her love;
Now, Vasquez, out of this ——

Enter a Servant.

Thy business, quick.

Serv. A lady seeks your presence.

Mont. I attend her. [*Exit Serv.*
She comes to know what progress I have made
In Valletort's preferment.
Meet me an half hour hence: we'll commune further.

Vasq. I will not fail, my lord.

Mont. Till then, farewell. [*Exit* VASQ.

This is a precious villain, whom I keep
To serve my purpose. He has done an act
To which he knows, by the strict course of law,
His death is adjunct; and I hold him fixt
Under the sharp suspended sword of justice,
To further my revenge: if he should shrink
From any enterprize I put him to,
I'll cut the trembling hair that bars his fate,
And let the keen edge fall on him.

Enter BRIANTHE.

Brianthe!
You were the latest in my thoughts. The state
Hath heard my suit press'd warmly for my friend,
And I am promised, on the next promotion
He shall not be forgotten.

Bri. Thanks, good Montano.
Yes! thou art noble; and the idle breath
Of a weak woman's praise I know is irksome.
The noble mind, disdaining recompence,
Rolls on its tide of bounty, like the Nile,
Expansive, silent as its secret source,
And laves, with equal pride, the desert spot
Whose wasted misery can yield no return,

And the fair laughing land whose beauteous bosom
Repays with rich fertility the debt.
Mont. Oh, had I power (as I am rich in will)
To cheat thy bosom of one lab'ring sigh,
Or in those lucid orbs suspend a tear,
It would be prouder triumph to my heart,
Than to the victor, in his trophied car,
The shout of nations: or the yielding sigh
Breath'd in soft murm'rings to a lover's ear.
Bri. I know it, for thou lov'st humanity;
And if I thought a woman's foolish fears
Were worth thy private ear ——
Mont. Speak on, speak on.
Bri. You are my husband's friend.
Mont. I fain would prove so.
Bri. Be not offended: but in Venice here,
Where thick temptations throng on every side,
To lure the rover from domestic joys ——
You must not make a truant of my lord.
Mont. What, doubt his constancy!
Bri. Nay, think not so.
The turtle, when her mate hath left her nest,
First knows the rapture his return would bring:
And I, whose thoughts and wishes, hopes and fears,
Are grafted all on him, where they must die
Or bring forth fruit——Oh! tempt him not abroad,
For I shall quarrel with the very air

That blows too freely on him; and the winds
Chide heavily that drive him from my home.
Mont. Is he not noble-minded? wild indeed
Of wing, and flush'd with youth: but what of that?
If through the empyreum high upborne,
Sublimely steadfast soars the king of birds
Too rash a flight, 'tis little difficult
To pluck a feather from his eager wing
And mitigate his speed: but who can give
Strength to an owlet's pinion; feed his eye
With fire to hold contention with the sun,
And sail majestic through the vault of heaven.
To prune luxuriance is an easy task;
But who can fertilize sterility?
Bri. True, true, Montano; and thou warm'st my heart
With the comparison. But yet his quick
And eager spirits ——
Mont. Oh, for shame! for shame!
Look at thyself, and say if he can wander.
Look at the smooth grain of that iv'ry skin,
Those cheeks of rose and lily—eyes of fire;
Oh, look on these, and say, can happy man,
Blest with the full fruition, e'er revolt?
Yet angels once rebell'd against their God,
To do base homage to the fiend of hell:

And *mortal* man's infirmities may slide,
Where pow'rs *immortal* fell. 'Tis possible —
Yet scarce to be conceiv'd; for now thou look'st
Some heaven-born wonder newly dropt on earth;
And thus I gaze with trembling rapture on thee,
As the rapt Indian gazes at the sun,
Whose dazzling lustre quite o'ercomes his soul.
Here could I fix ——
Bri. No more, I must not hear it.
Alas! 'tis beauty's mournful privilege,
Heedless to give the wounds she cannot cure.
Noble Montano, think not I mispriz'd
Thy long descent of valiant ancestry,
Thy fame in arms approv'd and generous offers;
Love is fantastical, nor will be led
By reason's sober light to fix her choice,
But wild and wanton sends abroad the eye
To cater for the heart — then think no more
Of me and thy past love so ill requited,
But from your high-born dames of prouder lineage,
Happier in fortune, higher in desert,
Select a heart, and weave your fates together.
Believe me, there is no such dear delight
No touch of joy like straining to thy breast,
In the pure folds of hymeneal love
Her whom your choice has sorted from the world

To tread the thorny path of life, and drink
Its mingled cup of gall and honey with thee.
But love misplac'd is the extremity
Of human bitterness — indulge it not;
'Twill feed upon the spring-time of thy youth,
Making thy breast a lonely wilderness,
Where one fierce passion ranging uncontrouled,
Shall banish peace and joy. ——
Forgive this tedious homily, which has nought
But friendship to plead for it. — So farewell,
Be virtuous and be happy. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to the street in Venice.

Enter URANE *and Child.*

Child. Why did that rough man drive us from his door
With words so bitter?
Ur. Know'st thou not, my child,
It is the privilege of pamper'd pride
To add rebuke to inhumanity:
Have we not seen the very dogs devour
Scraps our imploring eyes have begg'd in vain!
Art thou not hungry, boy?
Child. No, that I am not.
Ur. Nor weary, sweet one?

Ch. In truth my very limbs
Do ache with weariness — yet look not sad,
I can bear all but to see you look sad.
Ur. My brave young traveller!
Ch. Oh! look not thus,
Your sorrows wet my eyes — you us'd to smile
And tell me merry tales. Surely my father
If he but knew it, would not let us beg.
Ur. Have I not told thee oft?
Ch. Nay, be not angry:
You oft have told me not to talk of him;
And yet he comes so oft into my thoughts
That I forget myself — and you my mother,
Tho' you forbid my tongue to speak of him,
Yet often in your sleep repeat his name,
And beg a blessing for him. — I scarce think
I should remember him, for you yourself
Are sadly chang'd of late.
Ur. Alas! my boy,
Sorrow has shrunk me as a frost in May,
That falls upon the teeming buds of spring, ——
Which else had blossom'd beneath summer suns,
And bore autumnal fruit. — Come, you look fresh,
And bear you with the courage of a man.
Ch. I would I were a man.
Ur. Blessings on thee,

My little sum of joy. — O God of mercy!
To thy behests I bow — if 'tis thy will,
I'll wet my scanty pittance with my tears,
Bare my wan cheek to all the winds of heav'n,
And let the storm howl o'er my desolate bosom,
Nor lift a murm'ring eye. — But spare my child,
Let thy wak'd wrath smite th' offending tree;
But spare this tender blossom:
My little trembling innocent, who smiles,
Just peeping on a rough and churlish world,
Nor e'er in thought offended. — Come, my boy,
We must look out for some protecting shed,
Where insult cannot reach us, where unseen
I might bestow thee with a mother's care,
Wrap from the hollow gust thy shrinking limbs,
And watch thy startled sleep 'till morning beams.

ACT II.

MONTANO *and* VASQUEZ.

Mont. My plague in Venice? 'tis impossible!
Where saw you her?
Vasq. Close by the city gate
She sat and fixt the gaze of all beholders.
Mont. Your eyes deceiv'd you sure?
Vasq. At first, my lord,
I doubted whether I could trust their functions,
'Till drawing nearer from her throbbing breast
She drew a picture. 'Twas the very same,
Which, as a pledge and proof of early love,
You once presented her.
Mont. On with your tale.
Vasq. She looked at it as one would look on joy
Long parted with; then gaz'd upon her child,
Then on the picture, then again on him,
And thus continued with alternate glance
To note each line and feature of resemblance,
Till big with her own thoughts she dropt a tear
On both, and hugg'd them to her bosom.
Mont. Peace,
Thou croaking raven, peace. — I lov'd her once,
At least her beauty did persuade me so:
But of Brianthe ——

Vasq. What of her, my lord?

Mont. Sullen and cold she yet disdains my love.
(*Shewing a letter.*)
But I have wherewithal to make her mine,
Or much my hope deceives me. — Couldst thou not
Deposit this where it may meet her eye
Unseen of any else?

Vasq. No doubt, my lord.

Mont. It is a letter from that shrew Rodone,
Fill'd with a long detail of raptures past,
And hopes of coming joy. (*Gives him the letter.*)

Vasq. Address'd to Valletort.

Mont. About it quick, and tell me it is done.

Vasq. Where shall we meet again?

Mont. You'll find me here. [*Exit* VASQ.
This cannot fail: there is a sting in it,
Which rooted once, and rankling in the heart,
No skill of mortals ever can pluck out,
Or human patience render tolerable.
The wiry scourge and limb-dissevering axe,
Joint-racking wheels and slow-consuming fires,
All tortures else which tyrants in their wrath
Have conjur'd up to tear their trembling slaves,
Are mercy all to this. — They only reach
Our corporal sense of sufferance, but this
For ages shall impale the groaning mind
Upon the stretch of agony. Her love

I cannot reach — why then to rouse her vengeance.
Pride she undoubted has, for she's a woman,
And woman, when her pride roams for revenge,
Is little nice about the instrument;
But like the heedless whirlwind in her rage
Not rarely takes into especial grace,
To serve the present working of her hate,
The thing most loath'd before. She may be patient,
A martyr to her love! But injur'd there,
Where nature pleads reprisal, 'tis a goad
The chaste Lucretia ne'er was tempted with. ——
Succeed, but this ——
I'll bury there my love and deep revenge;
If not, some other means must be essay'd,
For she hath so absorpt my every sense
And taken with her beauty and her scorn
Such absolute possession of my soul
That I must pluck this coy retiring flower,
Tho' it o'erhung a nodding precipice,
And underneath the pois'nous adder lurk'd,
To leap and sting me e'en to death.

Enter VALLETORT.

Friend Valletort, why thou look'st melancholy:
Has ought untun'd thy soul?

Vall. My wife, Montano,
I have just parted from her.

Mont. Oh, he hath rail'd
Upon your truantry, and dinn'd your ears
With matronly correction ——
Vall. Oh! you wrong her.
Mont. What moves you then?
Vall. A something in my breast,
That tells me I'm a villain.
Mont. Tender conscience!
A bugbear that much frights unpractised sinners;
Ghosts to scare children with. ——
Vall. Peace, peace, Montano:
However we affect to laugh it off,
Reflexion's sober time will come at last;
And he that shuffles by from day to day,
The hour of thought, trusting it ne'er may come,
Like a deluded bankrupt, still hopes on,
Adding fresh items to the heavy balance. —
Had you but seen her —
Mont. Oh! I can fancy it, for I have heard
A woman's murmurings.
Vall. She murmur'd not,
Or if she murmur'd, 'twas but with a smile,
Which whilst it gently chid, forgave the wrong. *
She nothing utter'd, yet her eyes were full;

* This passage is extracted from the Author's early poem of *The Prisoner.*

And as we parted, turn'd her head aside,
To hide the tears that fell upon her cheek,
And wrung my hand with such a piteous fondness,
As might have wak'd a soul of adamant,
And (like the prophet's touch from Horeb's rock)
Wrung forth repentant drops. I'll go no more:
The very image of her heavenly patience
Stands like a warning angel in my path,
And wafts me backwards.

Mont. They are coz'ners all,
Sigh when they list, like reeds to every breeze,
And conjure up at will the oozing brine,
For smiles and tears are women's sorceries,
With which they wheedle man's deluded sense,
And melt him to their purpose. — Kind Rodone
Expects you there to-night.

Vall. I'll go no more.

Mont. What! when luxuriant beauty, such as hers,
Panting and ripe, a banquet for a god!

Val. Oh, talk not of her, I am mad already.

Mont. For which immortal Jove had left his skies,
And Mahomet renounc'd his fancied heaven.

Vall. No more — I prithee spare me.

Mont. Unbosom'd all to thee?

Vall. Peace, peace, Montano;
It fevers every sense.

Mont. And thou, forsooth,
To turn domestic driveller, talk of vows
By priestcraft fram'd to cheat us of those joys,
Which nature with a wide unsparing hand
Freely spreads forth to all, and bids them gather;
Fie! and a soldier too — then give her up;
And let the hungry harpies of the law
Seize on her goods, and turn her forth to wander,
For she is ruin'd.

Vall. Ruin'd! how?

Mont. Her senseless prodigality to one,
Who having fed on her prosperity,
And revell'd in the fulness of her fortune,
When he has pluck'd her golden feathers off,
Would turn her naked to the wintry wind;
A beggar on the world's humanity.
Know'st thou the man?

Vall. Ay, as I know myself.
I'm a contagious mildew, born to blast
Whate'er I light on.

Mont. No more moralizing:
All yet may be redeem'd — Your wife as yet
Knows nothing of your losses.

Vall. No, nor thinks
E'en with the slightest glancing of mistrust,
How deeply I have damn'd her.

Mont. There's my purse.
Nay, take it, there's some fifty ducats in't; to-night
Try fortune once again, she is a gill-flirt,
That's won with often wooing — come, look gay,
This may recover all.

Vall. Oh never, never,
All that can feed the sense and glad the eye,
Gold may redeem again: but all the slaves
That yet have ransack'd the wide womb of earth,
And excavated half the solid globe,
Have never lighted on that precious ore,
Whose current use could buy back innocence,
Or barter for lost peace — that blessed peace
Whose cherub voice whispers calm within,
When all without is uproar — where, Montano,
Where shall I find it?

Mont. In Rodone's arms.

Vall. Indeed it should be there, for there 'twas lost.
[*Exit.*

Enter ALMAR *to* MONTANO.

Alm. Have I found thee, villain!
Well may'st thou start,
Where is my sister? but I have no words
To waste upon thee — in my sword's keen point

Lies all my argument, which if it reach
The canker in thy heart, shall tell thee this: —
Thou might'st betray a woman, but a man
Is not within the compass of thy spells.
So stand and guard thyself.

Mont. So hot and fiery!

Alm. Fixt as her shame my vengeance, and as deep
As thy remorse should be.

Mont. Speak out thy wrongs.
Think'st thou because a woman would be kind,
And with soft dalliance soothe my idle hours —

Alm. Thou dost bely her, foully thou beliest her,
She came no eager wanton to your arms,
But slow and tim'rous, urged by solemn vows,
Which, villain-like, you since have violated,
She yielded up, a pure unspotted prize,
Her virgin heart. ——
Oh! she was all that nature ever form'd
To feed the ravish'd eye, and fill the soul.
With wonder and delight mankind beheld her.
Fresh as the lily, on the mountain's side,
She bloomed in vestal purity — Till a vile worm,
Crept to her innocent breast, and nestling there,
Distilled his venom on her opening sweets,
And left them all to wither.

Mont. I possess'd her,
Till passion chang'd to dull satiety,
And mutual jarring fill'd the void of love.
I hate hypocrisy, so left the fair
To range the world at large, and did the same.
Alm. Left her to want and biting infamy:
Oh, my poor sister, my deluded martyr,
Where dost thou wander now: the wintry storm,
That heaves the lab'ring mountain to its base,
And gives deep-rooted oaks their shaking fits,
How will thy cheek endure it? — Think of this,
Oh think and tremble, for if I forgive thee; —
Nay, if I do not hunt thee through the world,
As an attainter of my house's blood,
May I survive in shame that Roman pander,
Who to his sister's arms let in the ravisher,
And trick'd her out for midnight violation.
So vengeance guide my arm.
Mont. If thus resolv'd,
I have an arm as well resolv'd as thine,
A name more terrible, and tho' thou could'st
Daunt fire-ey'd Mars, and make him drop his lance;
Thus would I grapple with thee.

[*They fight. Enter* VASQUEZ, *who parts them.*

Vasq. For shame, put up your swords, whate'er may draw them.

Here, in the heart of a well governed city,
To venture open broil — if you have wrongs,
As by your vehemence they seem most deep,
Appoint some fitter time, and place more apt
To feed your enmities.

Alm. You school me rightly,
And I am calm again. (*To Mont.*) A word in private,
Where shall we meet, and speedily.

Mont. Appoint
The place and time.

Alm. To-morrow then, at twelve.

Mont. Well, be it so.

Alm. Exact at twelve. Till then, lie still my sword,
Nor leaping from thy dull and peaceful scabbard,
Upbraid my tardy vengeance. — Sir, at twelve. [*Exit.*

Mont. I will remember. Now, my faithful Vasquez,
Hast thou disposed of the letter?

Vas. Long ere this,
Her eye hath reach'd it.

Mont. That's my true contriver:
And for this hot-brained honour-breathing spark,
I am not yet so barren of my wit,
To encounter him with hazard of my life;
I'll fight no more with him.

Vas. But how prevent it?

Mont. 'Tis likely he has left the camp by stealth,

For on the eve of this great enterprize,
Which now our state is big with, all must bend
To the strict discipline and course of war:
Go therefore to the senate-house, and let it quick
Be buzz'd abroad, that he is stolen back,
And let his strange desertion so appear,
That it may bear the stamp of cowardice.
You understand me.

Vasq. I'll about it quickly. [*Exit.*

Mont. And now for love and vengeance, for by this
My bird is lim'd, and I must wing aloof,
To see her pant and flutter in the toil;
When, like the vulture hovering o'er his prey,
I'll pounce at once, and seize upon my quarry.

Scene changes to Valletort's.

Enter BRIANTHE *with a letter in her hand.*

Bri. It is a woman's hand — be still, my soul,
Nor let thy fearful boding rush on that,
Which unforeseeing, you may sleep in peace,
And wake to happiness — yet why of late,
Have all his letters been lock'd up from me?
When he was wont, unurged to shew me all,
And often laughing, bade me break the seal,
And read his mistress's name — light words in jest
Convert to weighty truths. — To live in doubt

Is hell—and who, that has the means of light,
Would still groan on, in dark uncertainty:
When apprehension of the ill we fear,
Smites deeply as the strong assurance can,
That what we fear is true, I'll doubt no more,
This shall resolve me. [*As she is going to open the Letter,* URANE *enters.*

Ur. Oh, my child, my child!
Sweet lady, they have carried off my child:
Some midnight ruffians, — my poor trembling boy,
My little traveller —

Bri. Whence and what art thou!

Ur. Torn him by force from my encircling arms,
His mother's arms. (*Enter Child.*) I have him once again,
I have him all — Have they not hurt thee, boy?
Oh no, they have not hurt him. — Gracious lady,
Turn us not forth to-night.

Bri. What brought you hither?

Ur. Lodge us within your stable, or if that
Be shut to wretchedness, some penthouse cover,
Any vile place where we may shroud from insult,
And man torment us not: turn us not forth,
Indeed I'll be most thankful, and my boy
Shall with uplifted hands beg blessings on thee,
But do not force us hence.

Bri. And look I so inhuman? but whence are you?

And by what strange disaster broke you in
So wildly on me?
Ur. A long winter's night
Would not suffice to tell thee half my woes,
And I am faint for want of sustenance;
My boy is hungry too.
Bri. Come in and feed then.
I am not yet so lifted above want,
To look untouch'd at misery, and myself,
A pilgrim on life's ragged path, would make it
Smooth to the heavy laden: lean on me.
Ur. Indeed I want support.
Bri. This way, come cheerly. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter BRIANTHE *with the Letter open.*

Why now my cup of bitterness is full,
Even to overflowing. All but this
I've borne without complaint — false to my love?
What have I done, what grievous sin committed,
That thou should'st cast me off? — When thou wert sad,
Have I not painted my wan cheek with smiles,
And made mine eye a traitor to my heart,
To cheat thee into mirth, and watch'd thy looks
As if my senses fed on nought but thee.
Have I not borne a father's uncall'd curses,
Which yet hang heavy on me? [MONTANO *enters behind.*
All for thee,
For thee, thou most unkind one. (*Weeps.*).

Mont. Let her weep,
These dewy beads dropt on her kindling rage,
Like scanty water on quick rising flames,
Will make it rage more fierce.

Bri. Why then let virtue's self turn hypocrite,
If he have melted on another's lip
The seal he took from mine. — Montano —
Pardon, my lord, alas! I had forgotten —

Mont. Rather let me beg pardon, who uncall'd
Have broke upon your sorrows. — False to her!

Report in every thing most scandalous,
Is here a very liar. — Oh, those lips!
Some bee of Hybla has been stinging them,
For breathing fresher sweets than his own rose,
And yet repenting left his honey there
To balm the wound he made.

Bri. Why talk'st thou thus?
Montano, speak!

Mont. What roseate cheeks,
For pity's dew to light on e'er it falls!
Upon those panting orbs that shame all whiteness,
Who that could throne him there, would vilely stoop
To cherish infamy!

Bri. I understand you.
Valletort's false, for so I must interpret
The wild and random glancing of your speech.

Mont. Now heaven forbid that my unmeasured words
Should breed the least suspicion of his love.

Bri. Nay, I have proof more palpable than that;
He *is* a cruel traitor to my love.

Mont. He should not be a traitor.

Bri. True, he should not.

Mont. For beauty so unparagon'd as thine,
And virtue so to give it sense and perfume,
Should be exempted from the common fate
Of those who mourn the inconstancy of man.

Bri. I have been told (would I had ne'er believ'd them)
By other cozeners than my flattering glass,
That nature in a kind and lavish mood
Endow'd my fair exterior, and men's tongues
Outrunning far the modest phrase of truth,
Have better'd nature's workmanship. — Alas!
Beauty like early blossoms of the spring
Fills up the wonder of a short-liv'd hour,
And then droops unregarded.
Mont. Tax not thus
With general speech our sex.
Bri. Oh! you all
Worship the trick'd out image of your fancies,
Till having rudely torn the veil aside
In which your wond'rous goddess is inshrined,
You marvel at your folly and grow wise.
False to my love! No matter, I alone
Am culpable. I might have lov'd more wisely,
Nor broke my father's heart by my perverseness.
But that's past remedy.
Mont. Past remedy!
Bri. Ay, where's my remedy?
Mont. The common one,
Of wives who, slighted by ungrateful lords,
Look for some friend to do them ample justice.

Bri. Have I a friend like this?

Mont. Behold him here. (*Kneels.*)

Nay, turn not thus away, nor fill those eyes
With scorn, whose beams alone bring comfort to me:
Think with what ardent longing I have lov'd;
How I have spent the day in thinking of thee,
And wearied out the night in watchfulness,
Whilst he that should bring transport to thy arms,
And fill them with enjoyment ——

Bri. Is thy friend,
Thy unsuspecting, gen'rous, trusting friend,
Whom thou would'st meanly take advantage of,
To stab his honour.

Mont. True, he is my friend;
But what is friendship when compar'd to love?
Love is omnipotent, and rends the seal
Even from the bond of friendship; in itself
Absorbing every other faculty:
Come then, nor coy it thus 'gainst nature's mood,
And woman's dearest privilege.—Oh! come,
And let me press thee warm and panting to me.

Bri. Unhand me, let me pass.

Mont. You mean it not.
There is a kind confession in thine eye *.
Which mocks the faint refusal of thy tongue.

* These lines were transferred to *The Curfew*.

Bri. (*Breaks from him.*) Villain, thou liest; my
burning cheek is red
At thine ill-manner'd speeches, and mine eye,
Had it the light'ning's eloquence, should blast
Thy arrogant presumption. — What, art mad!
Or drunk with wine, that here in mine own house
You thus abuse mine ears, and vent at will
Your bacchanalian rudeness?
Doubt not, my lord, your unsuspicious friend,
Your friend shall know from what most worthy motives
You have espous'd his cause. What, crest fall'n! think,
Think of your open honourable dealing;
And whilst you feel how pitifully low,
How much beneath th' opinion of itself
Vice can debase the most exalted rank,
Learn to revere the dignity of virtue.

[*Exit* BRIANTHE; MONTANO *follows.*

Scene, the Street.

Enter VALLETORT.

Why what a wretch am I? The needy villain
Who preys on the benighted passenger,
Goaded by poverty and starving brats,
Remorseless justice in his prime cuts off,
Whilst he who on the turning of a die

Beggars his family and blasts at once
The rip'ning hopes of his posterity,
Walks unrequited for the deed; and why?
The grey-hair'd justice slips his ermine off
And shakes the box himself; and erring man
Finds self-born mercy knocking at his heart,
To wink at vices which himself commits.
Or rather gaming is so huge an evil,
A savage monster so untameable,
That human vengeance cannot chain him down,
And leaves it to the slower wrath of heaven. —
My friend to shun me too — that is not well. [*Exit.*

Enter MONTANO *and* VASQUEZ.

Vasq. Think you she'll tell her husband?
Mont. No doubt, no doubt.
Vasq. Then it will end in blood.
Mont. Yes, blood must flow, but whose blood?
Oh! Vasquez,
Art thou indeed a friend, or is thy zeal
Hollow as exhalations of the morn?
Vasq. What means my lord?
Mont. To night he revels with that shrew Rodone,
From whom returning he must chuse his road
Thro' many a lonely and untravell'd spot
Suited to acts of darkness. Heed'st thou me?

Vasq. Most earnestly.

Mont. Oh, Vasquez! there are deeds
Which will not bear the piercing eye of day,
Yet when the moon, night's grand inquisitor,
Doth wink behind a cloud ——

Vasq. Go on, go on!

Mont. Psha! or thy sense is dull, or thy will slow
To execute. Have I not said enough?
In the still hour of night, when justice sleeps,
Vengeance from some dark ambush'd lurking place
Might steal abroad his arm, as I do now,
(Drawing a dagger.)
And stab securely. Art thou now my friend,
And canst thou answer that?

Vasq. Speak out your purpose.

Mont. Then briefly thus — this Valletort's my foe,
And I would have him ——

Vasq. Murder'd!

Mont. Yes, by thee.

Vasq. Murder'd by me, oh, horrible! the thought
Like thick besieging agues shakes me thro'.

Mont. Base palpitating villain!

Vasq. Hear me first,
And then condemn me.

Mont. Hear thee, coward slave!
What need to hear thee? thy pale quiv'ring lip,

Shrunk eye, and fear bleach'd cheek, interpret for thee.
What, I have over-task'd thy forward service?
But like the air swoln bubble —
Vasq. Hear me a moment,
Then let thine anger loose. I know this Valletort,
Once sail'd with him;
And as it chanc'd one rude and boist'rous night
We stood together on the vessel's side,
To see the warring elements encounter;
It chanc'd I slipt into the roaring deep;
Whose angry billows soon entomb'd me round.
Twice round my head the stunning waters foam'd,
Till the third time emerging faint and breathless,
Fearless he leapt into the boiling main,
Whose hungry womb yawn'd dreadfully upon me
And bravely buoy'd me up till further aid
Arriv'd to save us both. The thought of this,
In the first moment, when you urg'd his death,
Quick glanc'd across my mind, and quite unmann'd me.
The pang it gave is past, and now behold me
Ripe for the bloody deed.
Mont. You'll do it then?
Vasq. By all my future hopes I'll murder him,
Or fall in the act.
Mont. It must be done to-night.

Vasq. This very instant; for till it be done
I am rack'd with agony.
Mont. Take then this dagger,
And in some shady unfrequented nook,
Where night is thickest, sheath it in his heart.
Vasq. I know my place.
Mont. Hie thee then to it quick.
Vasq. Good night, my lord, good night.
Mont. Good night, and shrink not. [*Exit.*
Vasq. Oh, Valletort! when thou dost bid good night,
How shall I answer thee? [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

Scene, the Street.

Enter VASQUEZ.

Vasq. This is the spot, and somewhere hereabouts
He must pass homeward for a moment's pause:
'Twixt the commission of the foulest act
That ever stain'd the records of the times,
And sweet repentance e'er it comes too late—
To dip this hand in blood! in innocent blood!
The blood of human kind's! a friend's! preserver's!
In the full ripeness of his summer youth
To cut him off!
'Tis such a deed, as any pitiless fiend
Uncavern'd from the lowest depth of hell,
Would start appall'd and shrink remorseful back
At the bare thought of—in comparison,
Domitian might be call'd compassionate,
And Herod's massacre go storied down
White as the babes he slaughter'd!—But, Montano,
This tyrant holds my life at his disposal,
And therefore tasks me to his bloody purpose:
How to save him and yet not damn myself—*(Pauses.)*

There is no other way — it must be so,
I have liv'd long enough. Thou coward weapon,
That ever shun'st the honest eye of day,
Hence to congenial darkness. *(Throws away the dagger.)* — Hark! he comes.
Who passes there?

Enter VALLETORT.

Vall. A friend!
Vasq. Thy name?
Vall. Who asks it?
Good night to Vasquez, or my ear deceives me.
Vasq. The same, thy mortal foe.
Vall. The cause?
Vasq. A villain's!
Thou hast a beauteous wife.
Vall. Does that offend thee?
Vasq. Nay, she is good as beauteous.
Vall. Has she wrong'd thee?
Vasq. I cannot answer thee! Stand on thy guard;
I am thy sworn assassin: yet I've fought
In fields where Mars look'd grim and terrible,
And with a soldier's arm oppos'd to thine
I will attempt thee fairly.
Vall. Nay, but hear me.
Vasq. No more but this.
Vall. Nay, then, in self-defence,

I draw: come on, and heav'n decide betwixt us.

(They fight, VASQUEZ *drops his own sword and runs upon that of* VALLETORT'S, *and falls.)*

Vall. How fares it with you?

Enter ALMAR.

Alm. This way came the sound.
Murder seems busy here!

Vasq. (*To Alm.*) Beseech you, sir,
Who have by hazard witness'd this adventure,
Note, with my dying voice I here absolve
This injur'd gentleman. Oh, Valletort!
Had I the breath to tell thee. Oh, Montano!
Thy wife, thy unprotected wife —— (*Dies.*)

Vall. My wife!
Montano! what means that? Should it be so —
Should she have plotted with him! never, never —
My unprotected wife! it must be so;
Montano is a villain. (*Going.*)

Alm. Villainy
Might here have other shafts in store for you.
Till you are safe within the city gates,
Accept a stranger's service.

Vall. I have not time
To thank you, sir; but cheerfully accept
Your proffer'd help. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, an Apartment.

BRIANTHE *discovered.*

Bri. How wearily the heavy hours drag on,
When expectation chides the wings of Time.
A short half hour he said. An hour is past,
And yet he comes not. Oh! heedless rover,
Could thou but see
Who sends abroad for thee her waking thoughts,
How her heart beats with mingled hope and fear
At every footfall: to her arms thou'dst turn
With sweet remorse, and ever harbour there.
I'll softly steal, and see if sleep possess
My weary travellers.

[*Goes into the chamber and returns.*

Sweetly they rest in other's arms enfolded,
Rock'd by their own commotion into peace.
Sleep triumphs over sorrow: round her neck
Her infant smiling in sweet dreams beside her,
Hath thrown his little arm, as thither drawn
By nature's impulse, as the sweet-pea blossom
Curls round its native prop. I cannot sleep,
Yet I have heard the bosom void of guilt

Can on the sky-roof'd mountain find repose,
On the bare heath sleep out the wintry storm,
And make a pillow of the jagged flint,
Soft as young cygnets down. I cannot sleep,
Yet guilt I know not, and the healing balm
Of inward quiet ne'er shall know again.
Hark, 'twas some footing sure — no, all is still,
As when the nightingale has made a pause,
Leaving the night's ear void again? 'tis he:
There is more welcome music in his footstep
Than the world's minstrelsy. (*Montano enters.*) Montano here?

Mont. Why dost thou start? Am I so hideous, lady,
That at the sight thy nature shrinks abhorrent,
And the affrighted blood steals from thy cheek,
As at a church-yard apparition.

Bri. If here, you come
Thro' zeal of friendship at this lonely hour,
Your visit, tho' untimely, yet is welcome:
But, if you would misuse the night's solemnity,
To tell again your phrenzied dream of lust,
And rudely wound a modest matron's ear —
Your absence had been kinder:
Thou comest like the demon of the storm,
Rejoicing in the mischief he has spread.

Thy look is desolation, but thy touch
A withering blast to nature.
Mont. Why I come,
Proud beauty, you shall know: but gather this—
I came not to fool time away with words,
I came not to intreat, but to enjoy.
I did not come to woo thee like the dove,
But like the angry pard to spring upon thee.
Therefore these looks of scorn are out of season.
'Tis not the fierce displeasure of thine eye,
That lowers from out those over-jutting brows,
Thy tone imperious, or thy swelling lip,
Can shake me from my purpose. Mark me, lady!
Revenge can diet on a woman's scorn.
Bri. I do conjure you, as you are a man,
From woman's breasts have drawn humanity;
Damn not thyself and me.
Mont. Very woman to the last.
When the loud fury of your words are vain,
You try with tears to soften me to folly.
I am not to be mov'd; and thus I seize,
Cold stubborn fair one—
Bri. Oh, for mercy's sake!
Mont. No struggling, 'tis in vain. Thy chamber, lady?
This way.

Bri. Is there no help? Help! murder! help
Oh, Valletort! where art thou? Murder! help
(As he is forcing her into the chamber, URANE *enters.)*
Bri. Kind heav'n, I thank thee: this is thy o'er-watching.

Almar and Valletort afterwards enter.—The remainder of this piece is very imperfect. Montano dies; and Valletort and Brianthe are re-united. It was not without reason that the author complained of the difficulty he experienced in constructing a dramatic fable. It is, however, worthy of remark, that within four years from the date of this piece, *The Curfew* was produced.

THE END OF THE FRAGMENT.

THE INDIANS,

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SPANIARDS.

GONSALVO, Governor of a Spanish Fort.
FERNANDEZ, his Son.
FLORIO, Lover of Almanza.
PEREZ and GASPRO, Attendants of the Governor.
ABDALLAH, a Slave of the Governor.

ALMANZA, the Governor's Daughter.

INDIANS.

RAYMOND, an Englishman, but naturalized among the Creeks, and their Leader.
POTOWMAK, TELICO, } Discontented Creeks.
Other Creeks.

ZOA, Wife to Raymond.

Time, the Performance.

THE INDIANS.

Scene, the Governor's House.

Gov. (*With a letter in his hand.*) This stubborn girl
still thwarts my great design,
And stands between me and my monarch's smile.
Almanza! Florio has bewitch'd her, sure;
Taught her to mock a father's *dull* commands,
And give up all for love. Almanza!

Enter ALMANZA.

Alm. Sir.
Gov. Why came you not at first?
Alm. I beg your pardon,
If I have made you wait, sir.
Gov. You could not hear;
You were all eye to follow Florio.

I mark'd you: but no more such foolery.
Dispatches from our court arrived last night,
In which our monarch rates my service high,
And promises, if I fulfil his wishes ——
But you shall hear him speak.

(*Reads.*) "Above all things gain over the Indian chief. If fair means will not bribe him, he must be dealt with accordingly. Remove this obstacle to our nation's glory, and reckon upon the generosity of Philip."

Now listen, and observe me. This proud chief
Laughs at our proffer'd friendship—spurns our gold:
Fear then alone remains. This very hour
We were, by mutual consent, to meet,
And fix our boundaries. I've plac'd an ambush,
Which, as he passes ——You may guess the rest:
He is, ere this, my prisoner.

Alm. Oh, my father,
Think you that Indian friendship can be bought
With Spanish perfidy?

Gov. I will make him ours:
The rest depends on thee.

Alm. On me, my father?

Gov. Ay, girl, on thee. Well—
(*To a Messenger who enters.*)

Mess. The Indian chief, my liege.

Enter RAYMOND *as prisoner, and Spaniards.*

Raym. Is this your governor?
I pray you, sir, chastise your vassals here:
I have rebuk'd them, but they heed not me.
The foul-mouth'd rogues report that by your order
I am brought pris'ner here. It cannot be,
That in defiance of all public faith,
And the most solemn pledge 'twixt man and man,
You have surpriz'd me. Oh, I see 'tis false;
Your kindling cheek disowns the foul aspersion,
And blushes for this outrage of your slaves.

Gov. (*To the Attendants.*) Retire.
Go you, Almanza, to your chamber. [*Exit* ALMANZA.
'Tis by my orders you are here.

Raym. Indeed!
I then beg pardon of those humble knaves,
And thank you for this high-born courtesy.

Gov. You are too quick, sir. The great king, my master ——

Raym. Did he bid thee do it?

Gov. Again you are too warm. The king, my master,
Feels much good-will toward the Indian tribes.

Raym. And takes this royal mode of shewing it.

Gov. There was no other. Oft by friendly means

I've tried to bring us face to face; but still
You scorn'd my proffer'd love.
Raym. I scorn it still.
Is there no corner of the peopled earth
But ye must come to ravage? No small spot—
No sea-encircled nook, where man may rest,
But sordid gain, and bloody bigotry,
Must spoil his poor inheritance. Shame, shame!
You have a country blest to overflowing
With all the prodigality of nature:
Your palaces, your buildings, and your pomp
Of dress and equipage, fatigue the eye;
The daintiest viands crown your social boards;
Fruits that still ripen beneath golden suns;
Quick sparkling wine, that dances in the eye;
And women — ah, how lovely! Yet, shame, shame!
You leave the harvest all unreap'd at home,
To glean the scanty produce of our wastes;
And, like an envious churl, grasping at all,
Whose eye still hungers, tho' his hands are full,
Quit the encumb'ring fleeces of your flocks,
To shear the poor man's lamb.
Gov. With what an eye
You look upon our purposes! We came
To enrich, and not impoverish this domain.
Raym. Yes, as the bee brings honey to the flower,

Or locusts vegetation. To enrich us!
Your pardon, sir. Out of pure charity
You have then crossed the ocean: kindly come
To pour the rich o'erflowings of your cup
Into our empty chalice. Have you, then,
No work for your benevolence at home?
No ignorance to school? No sharp disease
That cannot find an hospital of mercy?
No sighs to hush—no tears to wipe away
Of your poor fellow countrymen? Believe me,
Your nation, sir, may find a home consumption
For all the human kindness it exports.
Look at nature:
The lordly oak throws not its branches far,
But meets a flower to shelter from the storm:
Nor does a sea of roaring waters sever
The poor man's hovel from the proud man's dome.

Gov. Still you will warp our purpose from the truth.
We came to do you service: to exchange
Our wealth for your's in honourable traffic:
To soften, to inform, to civilize.

Raym. To civilize! Peru and Mexico!
Pizarro! Cortez! witness ye the deed!
Yet, they had human shape, and bore God's image.
Oh, what a wilderness of human bones

You made of that terrestrial paradise!
Hell gave the word, and havoc was unsheath'd:
Rivers ran blood into the frighted sea:
Earth was a common sepulchre! The sun,
Thro' the hot steam of human massacre,
Look'd pale: whilst, o'er the dying and the dead,
The vultures, hov'ring on the tainted air,
Scream'd their wild raptures to the famish'd wolves.

Gov. These were our fathers' doings; we abhor them:
And it would shew a braver spirit, sir,
To let them now be shrouded with the dust,
That cannot rise and answer ye.

Raym. Indeed!
Shall we, the living, for example kill,
Yet scruple to anatomize the dead?
Shall the sepulchred spoilers of the earth
Rot, and no record have but lying marble?
No. 'Tis some check to mad ambition's havoc,
That when the grave his phrenzied dream has closed,
He has a reckoning with posterity.
But to the purpose. You are come as friends:
Your actions will prove that. This, sir, at parting:
'Tis not by deeds of brotherhood like this
The Creeks will reckon on your kind intentions.
What, hoa! who waits there?

Enter Guards.

Shew me to my dungeon. [*Exit* RAYMOND.

Manet Gov. His presence awes me; yet he must be won.

A braver spirit never breath'd in man;
A nobler form moved never in a god.
(*To* ABDALLAH.) Go, bid my daughter wait me in her chamber.
That done, dispatch thee to the Indian chief,
Prostrate thyself, and proffer him thy service.
[*Exeunt different ways.*

Scene, a Wood.

TELICO *and* POTOWMAK.

Tel. Raymond a prisoner!

Pot. Ay, curses on him!

Tel. I could curse deeply, for I love him not.
Besides that he has robb'd me of my hope,
Dominion o'er the nations of the Creeks,
He taunts me in the presence of our tribes
For being savage: when I bring my scalps,
He calls them trophies of a rude barbarian.
Thrice my own captives, when the fire was kindled,
He has releas'd from torture. How I hate him!

Pot. He robb'd *thee* of dominion, that stings home: *Me* of a woman whom I lov'd as life. And if I do forgive him——

Tel. Thou'rt no Indian.

Enter a Creek.

Creek. They are Spaniards.

Tel. Bring them.

Creek. They're here.

Enter Creeks with FLORIO, FERNANDEZ, *and* GASPRO, *bound.*

Tel. Your business here? who are you? (*To* FERNANDEZ.)

Fer. Son to the Spanish Governor.

Tel. Ha? (*Aside.*) And you (*To* FLORIO.) What is your name?

Flo. I don't just now recollect it.

Tel. Away with them,—how they shall be disposed of, we'll think anon.

Flo. In the mean time you will give directions, that a picture of which I have been plundered be restored.

A Creek. This is it.

Pot. Give me the picture. (*Snatches it.*) I have a use for it; when it has served my purpose, it shall be yours again, Spaniard.

Tel. Away with them.

[*Exeunt* FLORIO, FERNANDEZ, *and* GASPRO.

The light dawns on me, and my vigorous blood
Leaps through my veins at the bright dawn of vengeance.

Pot. Their death shall cry for Raymond's.

Tel. Nay not so:
That policy, a Spaniard might have hit on.
Grant if we kill these Spaniards, Raymond dies;
But then we stir the vengeance of these white men.
Why do the deed, when the report will serve us?
E'er night-fall it shall reach the governor's ear,
His son has perish'd — Raymond's death will follow.
Then when the Spaniard raging for revenge
Sends forth his bloody myrmidons to hunt us,
We will produce untouch'd our noble captives,
And change their cry of war to grateful praises
On our humanity. — Looks not this well?

Pot. I think it cannot fail.

Tel. It shall not fail!
So marvel not, I treat with courtesy
These Spaniards, whom I hate as deadliest foes.
The panther roars not, till his trembling prey
Pants in his gripe: the monarch of the air
Screams when he plants his talons. So will I,
When I can strike, sound shrilly in the ears

Of these cursed white men, such a whoop of war,
As shall be both a warning and a knell;
And like a frightful dream, whose end is death,
They shall awake to look upon their graves:
Our foolish snake foretells his foe's destruction,
The omen of his own — we, like the adder,
Both hiss and bite at once, secure of vengeance.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene, the Spanish Prison.

RAYMOND *followed by an Officer.*

Raym. Your business is dispatch'd, sir.
Offi. I was bid
To wait upon you.
Raym. I want no attendance:
When I am bed-rid, I will send for you.
I would be left alone: it is your business
To see I do not starve, the rest is mine. (*Exit Officer.*)
These Spaniards have me in the toil, and think
To shape my spirit to their purposes.
First they would soothe me: if that fails, 'tis like
I shall have stripes anon: just so they use
A beast, by pampering his appetite.
By violence they think to paralyse
The holy powers of nature, but they shall find
That food, nor blows, caress, nor chastisement,
Shall bury in oblivion the foul wrong
By which I'm here. (*Enter* ABDALLAH.)
Which of the devils art thou?
Abd. The slave Abdallah.
Raym. What the governor sent thee?
Abd. Yes.

Raym. For what purpose?

Abd. To be your slave too,
To dance or sing to you, to bring you food
Or drink, to watch you fearfully whilst sleeping,
That I may fly, when you awake, to serve you.

Raym. Away, I have no appetites that need
A slave — for I am master of myself.
Thy dance or song may soothe me, and I thank thee;
But for the other offices thou nam'st,
Wert thou a dog, of but an hour's acquaintance,
I would not so degrade thee. Hark!
(*The sound of a guitar without.*)
What's that

Abd. 'Tis my young mistress.

Raym. What Almanza?

Abd. Yes.

Ray. Hark! (*She sings to the guitar.*)

I.

The sun is sunk beneath the wave,
The moon-beams twinkle on his grave,
Oh whither does my hunter roam,
When shadowy twilight calls thee home.
No rustling brake betrays the deer,
Couch'd in his covert sleeps the bear,
The star of morning bade thee rove,
But yon pale star does light to love.

II.

Does tangling forest vex thy way?
Or reedy swamp thy foot betray?
Or has the twang of hostile bow,
My gallant warrior, laid thee low?
Hark! 'tis his voice, he comes with speed,
I knew the neighing of his steed;
Safe in my arms, you shall not rove,
Until the morning dawns, my love.

Raym. What can this mean? Is it her custom thus,
Like Philomela, chusing solitude,
To soothe the house of mourning.
Abd. No, her father,
He bad her come and sing.
Raym. Sits the wind so?
Abd. She comes this way.
Raym. I will be frank with her.

Enter ALMANZA.

Alm. My father bids me tell you, that till sunset,
Passing your honour you will then return,
You are at liberty.
Raym. I thank you, lady,
For being freedom's hand-maid. Is that all?

Was there no further purport in your visit?
Did not your father bid you practise, lady,
Whilst with your hands you took my fetters off,
T'enthrall me with your eyes? Be honest now,
And I'll be plain with you.

Alm. You have guess'd well
My father's purpose, but these blushes, sir
Are for his thoughts, not mine. I came, believe me,
But by command.

Raym. Hear then a simple tale,
That to the purpose shall speak plain and full:
Some years are past (no matter now the cause)
Like jarring friends, I and my country parted;
I sought my fortune 'midst the Indian creeks.
'Twas at the close of a long sultry day,
Upon a wild savanna, faint with hunger,
Shook with a fever, I look'd round in vain,
For trace of living object, man or beast:
But all was horrid stillness — on the ground
I lay me down in absolute despair,
So very sick at heart, that when at last
My jaded senses dropt into oblivion,
I car'd not, if mine eye-lids, as they clos'd,
Should ever open on another dawn.
But long I slept not; sudden in mine ear
These accents softly whisper'd — "Wake, poor man.

"White man, awake; the rattle-snake is near;
"The tyger is not couch'd yet." I awoke:
It was a woman — she drew back awhile
To gaze full on me, and put forth her hand
With such a look of kindness (pardon me,
I ne'er can think on't with impunity) —
She led me to her hut, brought me fresh food,
And water from the spring — watch'd o'er my sleep,
And when I woke, she brought me food again;
Thus three long weeks she nurs'd me, and meanwhile
Taught me her language with a breath so sweet,
And was so apt a scholar learning mine,
(For of such little offices as these,
The mighty sum of love is all made up)
That with reviving health I drew in that
Which wanted still a cure; and not long after,
When of the Creeks I was appointed chief,
Then I remember'd Zoa, and her care
Of me at life's extremity. Yes, then,
In the full face of our assembled warriors,
I took her for my wife; and shall I leave her?
No, not for all the white-complexion'd dames
That dazzle Europe: never, never.

Alm. Accursed be she who tempts thee. — I am come
To seek your faithful friendship, not your love.

If by a father's tyranny compell'd,
And urg'd beyond the patience of my sex,
I should take shelter with you —
Raym. With the Creeks?
Alm. Ay, for I pant for freedom..
Raym. True, 'tis sweet;
But to the bird who never stretch'd his wing;
Or felt the season's sharp vicissitudes,
Fed by your hand, and lodg'd within your bosom,
Freedom is fatal, lady.— Have you ponder'd
Well on the horrors of the savage state?
How our rude modes will shock your gentle breeding?
Our simple fare mock your high-season'd palate?
Our mean attire your heavenly beauty shroud?
On the bare earth can those soft limbs find slumber?
And then our habitations, — ah! too mean
For beasts to hovel in.
Alm. Yes, I have thought
Of all the ills your fancy conjures up;
Ay, and of more: the road I know is rough,
And I ill shod for such a pilgrimage;
Yet not the elements, nor man, nor beast,
Can to this heart strike terror more profound,
Than a stern father's uncontracting brow,
Who, on the altar of his mad ambition,
Would offer up his child. — Will you protect me?

Raym. Yet pause upon the brink of resolution,
Nor in a fit of spleen, a flush of anger,
A momentary tumult in the blood,
Do that which will bring long repentant days,
Or nights of lonely hopeless meditation,
And leave a sharp imperishable thorn,
When all the rose is withered.

Alm. You speak thus,
Because I am a woman.

Raym. No, believe me,
Oh! when the loud-tongued trumpet, and the drum,
Stirs all his soul, a soldier's wounds but warm him;
But in the after calm, when slaughter sleeps,
Then as he festers in the midnight air,
And raw winds pierce his mangled body thro',
He curses honour and disclaims ambition.
I could say more, if time would halt to hear me;
But the day wears, and e'er the downward sun
Kisses the ocean, I would see the Creeks;
Suffice it, lady, after having call'd
Your thoughts to counsel, should you still resolve
To keep your desp'rate resolution,
Such welcome as rude savages can give,
You may command.

Alm. Come I will lead you to the light of day.
Would I could bear to all, the thrilling voice

Of liberty, and thro' the peopled earth,
Unbar the dungeons of captivity. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Governor's House.

GONSALVO *and* ABDALLAH.

Gons. My daughter not return'd?

Abd. She's coming, sir.

Gons. Say, I would speak with her. (*Exit* ABDALLAH.) 'Tis now unlucky
I ever promised her to Florio;
I was too sudden in my resolution:
The wise make no resolves — for still to-morrow
Laughs at the cunning purpose of to-day,
And man's the slave of circumstance. (*Enter* ALMANZA.)
Well, girl,
What think you of our Indian prisoner?
Could you not love him?

Alm. Yes, my father,
As I love all men, charitably love him;
But never with that fulness of the heart,
Which can love only one — He has a wife, sir,

Gons. He may divorce her.

Alm. Why then he shall not.

Gons. How?

Alm. Be not angry, sir. I have been ever
A most obedient child; from memory's dawn *

* This speech is transferred from *The Curfew*.

I've hung with silent awe upon your lips,
And in my heart your counsels treasured up,
Next to the hallow'd precepts of my God:
But with a new delight my bosom throbb'd,
When first you talk'd of Florio. — You said, sir,
He was a handsome youth — I thought so too —
A brave one; my heart beat with fearful joy.
You said he was not rich, I heav'd a sigh
And turn'd my head; but whilst the struggling tear
Stood in my eye, you swore that fortune's gifts
Were mean compar'd with nature's — Then, my father,
You bad me learn to love him.

Gons. Once indeed
I had a foolish dream of such a thing.

Alm. Oh, but I dream so still.

Gons. 'Tis time to wake then.

Enter GASPRO.

Well, sir, why break you in with that pale face?
There lives a wild impatience in your looks,
To utter horrid tidings — Speak!

Gasp. Your son!

Gons. Well, what of him? Is he made pris'ner, speak;
Or fallen from his horse? the worst, and quickly.

Gasp. Near to the line which parts us from the Creeks,

We rous'd a stag, which soon o'erleapt the boundary.
Hot in pursuit, disdaining to be foil'd,
Your son press'd boldly on, and bade us follow.
Young Florio gave his willing steed the rein,
And Perez and myself spurr'd panting after,
I being far the hindermost. — Soon the rest
Became entangled in a reedy swamp,
Where, whilst they plung'd to extricate themselves,
A swarm of Indians with an hideous yell
Sprang from the woods, and made them prisoners.

Gons. And thou didst fly, didst basely fly; to save
Thy coward life.

Gasp. Perhaps to save my master's:
I thought my flight, for they were arm'd and many,
Might do him service: nor without much peril
Did I achieve my purpose; for their arrows,
Like swarming adders, hiss'd around to sting me.

Gons. Well, well; their chief is in my power.
Confusion!
Should he have left the prison.

Alm. 'Tis even so;
He left it, sir, with me.

Gons. He has escap'd then.

Alm. No, I would pledge my soul upon his honour.

Gons. Summon the soldiers! Pedro, which way
went he?

Did no one mark him? Quick! a guard! You, Gaspro,
Must guide us to the Indians. Beat the drum
Upon the ramparts. I'll not trust his honour:
No, nor the mercy of these savages.
Saddle another horse for Gaspro. Come,
We'll hunt them to their hiding-place. Away!

[*Exeunt all but* ALMANZA.

Alm. Florio a prisoner with the Creeks! Alas!
There is no time to pause then. I can find
The path which Raymond took: and to disguise
The better both my quality and country,
I'll paint my face: and to have borrow'd plumes,
I'll buy the dress of the poor Indian girl
That waits upon me. Thus apparell'd, boldly,
Should I miss Raymond, I will seek out Zoa.
Courage, my heart! My body is but small;
Yet feel I here within a braver spirit
Than these frail limbs will vouch for. Then, adieu!
My unkind father: yet I leave you not
Till your affection has forsaken me. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Creeks. FERNANDEZ, FLORIO, *and* PEREZ, *bound.*

Fern. Peace, Florio.

Flor. Every man, you know, is allowed to make his own funeral oration. You, sir, I presume, (*to* TELICO) are master of the ceremonies to this Indian auto da fe.

Tel. Well!

Flor. Now, though I have been always very strongly of opinion that I should die one time or other, I can't say that I feel completely reconciled to this mode of making my exit.

Fern. Can't you be quiet?

Flor. In the first place, my constitution is always extremely incommoded by excessive heat: then I've such a natural aversion to pain, that I shall disgrace your entertainment, and roar most confoundedly: therefore, sir, if you would administer water to us instead of fire, or at all events give us a little of both; or if you would do us the favour to dispatch us in a gentlemanly christian-like manner, by breaking us on the wheel, or hanging, or à la Turque, by the bowstring, or impaling us alive, we shall feel the obligation as long as we remain in this world; and do all the good offices we can for you in the next.

Tel. Unloose that man.

(*Pointing to* PEREZ, *whom they unbind.*)

Flor. So, Perez is to be cook'd first. Well, it's

the first time he ever took precedence of his master;
and I forgive him with all my heart and soul.

Tel. You may depart, sir. (*To* PEREZ.)

Fern. and Flor. How!

Tel. D'ye hesitate?

I say you may depart: there is your horse;
Quickly bestride him then: but look not back,
Or death will overtake you. Tell your master,
That for our captive chief his son shall die:
And halloo with full voice into his ear
That Telico — I — lit the fire! Away! [*Exit* PEREZ.
So, he is mounted: by the soul of man
He puts his courser to the proof.

Flor. Would he were carrying double, though I rode behind.

Tel. (*To* POTOWMAK.) Now we'll release them.

Pot. Ay.

Tel. Set their limbs free. We war not with the Spaniards;
And though with this grim face of preparation
We frighted yonder fool that flies so fast,
We never had a thought against your lives;
No, nor your liberty.

Flor. I knew you couldn't be in earnest.

Tel. You must remain with us to-night: to-morrow
Shall give you liberty. Come, you shall see,

Since now we have acknowledged you as friends,
How we should treat our enemies.

(The ceremony of sacrificing prisoners is gone through, in which a dance may be introduced, and the following verses sung.)

Ye, whose death still unrequited,
Groans for vengeance from the tomb,
Hither, from the land of spirits,
Souls of slaughter'd warriors, come.

Let the song of death arouse ye;
Let it sooth your deep despair;
As, with wild delight, ye hover
On the blood-polluted air.

Ye have drank revenge full deep;
Souls of slaughter'd warriors sleep.

And thou, god of battle, hear us;
Thou, who in the fight art near us,
Mighty Aro-uski, hear.
Sweet and lovely, in thine eyes,
Is the purple sacrifice;
And the sounds to thee are dear,
When mingling float around thy throne
Victor's shout—victim's groan.

ACT III.

Assembly of the Indian Chiefs.

POTOWMAK *rises and addresses them.*

Pot. Why we are met, my fellow countrymen,
Needs no discourse. Your universal cry
Is vengeance; and the purpose of your souls
Shines in the grasp of your uplifted steel.
Yet how to strike the blow demands a pause:
And first, whilst in remote captivity
Raymond is bound, I think some other warrior
Should be proclaim'd our leader.

An Indian. Right! but who?
Who shall succeed to Raymond?

Another Indian. Why, Potowmak!

Other Indians. Ay, ay, Potowmak, he shall be our chief!

Another Indian. Who dares oppose it?

Pot. I.
My heart beats high to thank you; but this arm
Wields not the thunder of your captive chief.
There is a man (I speak not in contempt
Of other warriors) fit to succeed Raymond;
And only one.

Indians. Name him.

Pot. His actions shall proclaim him. You have seen
His arm thro' danger cleave a dreadful path.
Like lightning you have heard the mortal twang
Of his unerring bow-string: you his scalps
Have number'd, and have counted o'er his scars,
That once were bleeding wounds. Yet—need I name him?
Him, to whom war is rest and nourishment:
Who loves the peril best that looks most grim
Shame on your memories. That night of hell
Have you forgot when, from the naked brow
Of yonder promontory we turn'd pale,
To see the warring elements encounter,
Sudden he leapt into the foaming darkness.
Indian. 'Twas Telico.
Pot. Each shrinking eye involuntary clos'd,
Nor op'd but by degrees, with trembling wonder,
To see him on the billows fix his throne,
And ride upon the tempest to the shore.

(*As he concludes,* TELICO *enters, with a dignified air.*

Indian. He shall be our chief.
Indians. Ay, Telico, Telico shall be our chief!

(RAYMOND *enters from the opposite side.*

Raym. You have well determin'd.

Tel. Confusion! He return'd! (*Aside.*

(*The Indians crowd round* RAYMOND.

An Indian. 'Tis he! and safe!

Raym. Spare your congratulations, Creeks: ere sun-set
I must return.

Tel. How! (*Aside.*

An Indian. Return ere sunset?

Raym. My word is plighted: who would have me break it?

Indian. They keep no faith with us.

Raym. And therefore, Creek,
They want a fair example.

Indian. They have broken
The common bond of nations.

Raym. What of that?
All Europeans lie: is, therefore, truth
To find no temple in the human breast?
Shall I take up with vice at second hand;
And be the shadow of deformity?
I tell you I have promis'd: therefore, peace!
Nor let us waste the time that speeds so fast.
Telico—

Tel. Well!

Raym. They have proclaim'd thee chief.

Tel. They did it freely.

Raym. Ay, and wisely too:
If thy great spirit were as quick to spare
As it is prone to conquer, there's not one
Of all our mighty nations—not a Creek
Could boast a soul so terrible as thine.
For thou dread'st nothing.
Tel. One thing.
Raym. What can that be?
Tel. The friendship of a Spaniard.
Raym. Dread it still:
Commune not with them; they have spells to curse ye:
There is a treacherous sorcery in their bowl;
However pledg'd, their drink shall make you mad.
Tel. They are come for gold.
An Indian (some years since) in the mountains found
Some grains of that curs'd metal, which he sold
To a wreck'd Spaniard. He, returning home,
Brought here this swarm of spoilers.
Raym. You say true;
That was the spell that charm'd them; they are come
To make you slaves, to dig their glitt'ring idol,
And beasts to bear the burden to their coffers.
But ye are men, not beasts: ye will not suffer
These fierce hyenas of the wilderness
To violate the graves of your forefathers,

And change the habitations of the dead
To charnel-houses for the living. No.
(But yon declining orb *half meets his goal*)
Chiefs, warriors, friends, my Creeks, my fellow men,
I must away — to chains — perhaps to death!
Then look upon me as a dying man,
Who has a parting fond request to make:
And when 'tis granted, shuts his eyes in peace.
Indians. Speak; we will do it.
Raym. I heed not pain — I start not at the grave:
But when this perishable frame decays
In dust and darkness, tell the Spaniards thus:
"Three moons we give you to depart in peace:
Our forests *shall repair your sea-worn ships:*
Whate'er our land produces, victual them:"
Then, when the work of preparation's o'er;
When in their flapping sails the wind plays fair,
And rattles in the cordage — speed them on,
And wish them happy in their native land:
But if they should refuse——(*They lift their hatchets.*)
Ay, then strike home!
You have no choice. This land, that cannot be
A peaceful habitation to you both,
Must be a grave to one. Then sweep, at once,
These robbers from your country: leave no trace
Of aught that's Spaniard: let the memory

Even of their crimes be razed,
And perish to our children.
Indians. We will remember.
Raym. Why then, farewell. Potowmak, Telico,
Cherish my words. Farewell. Now to my fate.

Enter Zoa.

Zoa. My life, my soul, my husband.
Raym. Ha! this I look'd not for. (*Aside.*)
Tel. (*To* Potowmak.) She'll ruin all.
Pot. Fear not—her whole sex could not move him.
Tel. Mark them.
Zoa. You will not speak to me. Nay, now I see
The cause; your joy can find no words. Yet speak:
Come, you look weary. 'Neath our orange tree,
Upon the dry turf, you shall sleep, and I
Will watch you; whilst the soft winds gently shake
The o'er-blown blossoms on your perfum'd rest.
Raym. I cannot bear it.
Tel. He relents. (*Aside.*)
Raym. My wife!
We must this moment part.
Pot. (*To* Telico.) He'll keep his word.
Raym. Hear me, Zoa.
I must, ere sunset, (for my word is pass'd)
To prison.

Zoa. Be it so; there will I dwell!

Raym. Perhaps to death!

Zoa. *Then it shall be my tomb.*

But why to prison?

Raym. I have promis'd so;

Shall I betray my faith?

Zoa. No, not for worlds;

For when you took this hand, and kiss'd it first,
You pledg'd your faith that death alone should part us.
What is a prison, but a closer home?
Have I not on the sky-roof'd mountain slept,
Rock'd by the whirlwind; and when loud and dark
The midnight march of the careering storm
Howl'd o'er the uprooting pine; when nature quak'd,
As with the mighty throb of dissolution,
Amidst the various tumult of my soul,
Have I not felt the sweetness of thy presence?
What, though the walls be damp and desolate;
The house of famine, pestilence, and death,
Is it not thine — and shall you dwell alone?
'Tis such a place that cries aloud for comfort.
What charm can comfort bring to man like woman?
What woman like a wife? Let me go with you.

Raym. It cannot be.

Tel. She moves him e'en to tears. (*Aside.*)

Pot. Yet he is fix'd.

Zoa. I will but watch thee with *unwinking* eye;
And if a tear upon thy cheek should light,
I'll kiss it gently off, and still forbear to wake thee.
Raym. I cannot bear it. Telico!—Potowmak!
Tear us asunder. (*They part them.*) Will you basely stand
And see your chief dishonour'd by a woman?
Farewell. My manhood never shrunk till now. (*Aside.*)
Be kind and gentle to her. Oh! farewell! [*Exit.*
Zoa. (*Breaking indignantly from the Creeks.*) Zoa is never wont to force her love
Where 'tis not welcome. Yet, 'tis somewhat strange;
I ask with him to share captivity,
And he refuses me.
Pot. (*To* TELICO.) It strikes her deeply:
Withdraw the Creeks, and leave us. [*They retire.*

POTOWMAK *and* ZOA.

Zoa. And why am I forbidden to partake
His bread and water, and his scanty straw;
And "'tis a place ill fitted to my sex:"
As if I had a soul to be dismay'd
With what these Spaniards can inflict. 'Tis strange,
There must be something more.
Pot. He must return,

Forsooth, to take his honour out of pawn.
It may be deeper pledg'd than he inform'd us.
Zoa. What can he mean?
Pot. To sell us.
Zoa. Fie upon thee!
Pot. The governor has offer'd him large bribes.
Zoa. Yes, but his soul is larger.
Pot. Proof against gold,
He still may yield to beauty.
Zoa. What?
Pot. The Spaniard
Has a fair daughter.
Zoa. Raymond has a wife.
Pot. Soon he'll have two, or fame belies him much:
'Tis said she loves him; language cannot paint it;
'Tis certain that she visits him in prison.
Zoa. Thou art a man of truth; oh, do not mock me.
Pot. As I've a soul 'tis true. But mark me right,
I do not say 'tis love: I only vouch
That she, alone, by stealth, to his dark cell,
Out of pure charity, perhaps, has stolen.
'Tis whisper'd, tho' I credit not the tale,
A Spanish priest has ratified their vows.
Zoa. His wife! the wife of Raymond! What am I?
Say, is she very beautiful? His wife!
And brave, and young; tall, or of middle stature;

Of what bewitching colour are her eyes—
Majestic in her gait? Speak.
(POTOWMAK *shews her the picture he took from* FLORIO.
Is that she?

Pot. It wants but breath to be her living self.

Zoa. Where got you that?

Pot. 'Tis Raymond's.

Zoa. Came it from her?

Pot. I know not that: but fearing he might damage
Or lose the thing, he gave it me in charge.

Zoa. Let me look on it. (*Takes it.*) What a face is here!
How fresh the red and white of her complexion:
The parting locks that hang on either side
Of this fair forehead. What his wife? These lips,
They can talk many languages, and sing
The song of his own country. This white hand—
Yet shall she be his wife? This hand can play
On many instruments, and knows, by turns,
A thousand witcheries to charm him from me.
I never thought how foul I look'd till now.

Pot. What, do you weep? With bare suspicion weep.
What, tho' she steals to his dungeon—that's no proof
Of warmth beyond esteem. And for that bauble,

Perhaps, tho' somewhat it does strain belief,
He may have found it. Or suppose the worst,
Grant they are wedded ——
Zoa. How!
Pot. You're still his wife:
Somewhat diminish'd from your former self,
But yet his wife: reft of his love, indeed,
But still entitled to civility:
Doom'd to some galling offices, perhaps;
To serve where you commanded; to stand by,
And see them mingle kisses in the cup.
Zoa. I will have vengeance!
Hence, and let me think.
Pot. Give me the picture then.
Zoa. Away, Potowmak;
I'll bring it presently.
Pot. Fie on these thoughts!
You are an Indian woman, who, till wrong'd,
Shouldst feel affection, and when wrong'd ——
Zoa. Revenge.
I want not to be schooled. Away!
Pot. Farewell, then. [*Exit.*
Zoa. Think'st thou I'll weep, and load the air with sighs:
A spectacle of pity, sit me down,
That men may cry "Poor Zoa" as they pass!
No, let the breath that should be spent in sighs,

Blow the loose sparks of vengeance to a flame;
And my hot tears like scanty water feed it:
White man, beware, for thou hast wrong'd my love,
And thou his fair fac'd minion keep aloof,
Out of my hatchets sweep, beyond the flight
Of the wing'd death that in my quiver sleeps,
Or I shall strew thy tresses on the earth,
And feed the vultures with these dainty limbs.

Enter ALMANZA *disguised as an Indian woman.*

Zoa. Ha! Who art thou?

Alm. One who has broke upon your meditations,
To learn the shortest road to Zoa's hut.

Zoa. What is thy business with her? I am she.
Thou art not of our tribe.

Alm. Nor of your country —.
You see a Spanish fugitive.

Zoa. A Spaniard?
Thou art the governor's daughter? 'Tis by heav'ns!
(*Aside.*)

Alm. You have guess'd boldly, think not therefore rightly.

Zoa. Your pale cheek tells me 'tis a cunning guess,
A true one, lady.

Alm. Who and what I am
You shall be told hereafter; now suffice it,
I am the friend of Raymond.

Zoa. Have you seen him?
Alm. Yes.
Zoa. In his prison? Did you visit him?
Alm. I was the herald of his liberty. —
Zoa. Oh 'twas a truly charitable thought
To visit a poor captive in his cell:
And tho' cold-blooded prudence at the deed
Might shake her head, and envy look awry,
Yet we have souls above such sorry fancies:
We know to prize the act, and clasp the doer
In the warm fold of friendship — Raymond's friend
Must be the friend of Zoa. You look weary;
Come, I will lead you to my hut.—Believe me,
I feel with a keen sense the obligation,
And hope ere long to thank you as I ought. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

Governor's House.

GONSALVO *as returning from the pursuit of the Indians, with Attendants.*

Gons. It is in vain — My rage is idly spent,
Wild as the wind that o'er the desert sweeps.
My heedless boy! Oh, should this Indian scape me,
It may go hard with thee — (*Enter a Messenger.*)
Messenger. He's here.
Gons. The Indian?
Raym. (*Entering.*) Stand by, and let me pass.
Gon. Then all is well.
Raym. You see I keep my word, sir,
Gons. You may have heard
My son, another Spanish gentleman,
And their attendant, by your savage tribes,
Have been most basely seiz'd,
Raym. What, by the Creeks?
Gons. Yes, and are now detain'd
Raym. As prisoners, sir?
Seiz'd without provocation, and unarm'd.
Gons. Ay, as they hunted —
Raym. 'Tis a grievous fault,
In savage Indians most unpardonable:

Had they been Spaniards, who to serve their turn,
Had kidnapp'd an unciviliz'd Creek,
Whilst they held out to him the right hand of friendship,
Something might have been said: — but for rude Creeks,
Excuse me whilst I hang my head and blush,
That they should so forget humanity. —

Gon. I understand your sneer; but mark me, sir,
If they but *scratch* my boy — observe me well,
If they draw from him but one drop of blood;
Thou shalt be rack'd and tortur'd, till thy groans
Have reach'd the topmost note of agony.

Raym. Gnats and musquitoes.

Gons. Mark me well,
Thou shalt be years in dying.

PEREZ. (*Entering.*) Where's the governor,

Gon. Ha! what bringest thou? out with thy horrid tale:
It cannot be more dismal than thy looks;
Nor can my cheek grow paler with the news,
Than thine is in the bearing it. Proceed —

Per. Thy son and Florio,

Gons. They are dead? — go on.

Per. I hope not so.

Gons. And yet thou fear'st it, speak.

Per. We were made prisoners.

Gons. Psha! what follow'd? quick —

Per. They bound and led us deep into the wood,
Where, after a short council of their chiefs,
We were brought forth —

Gon. Proceed, I am prepar'd;

Per. Deep in the earth, the fatal stakes were driv'n,
And their wild shouts promiscuous fill'd the air;
When starting from the rest, a chief advanc'd,
They call'd him Telico. —

Raym. Why, then, 'tis done.

Per. On me he glar'd, and roar'd "Unloose his bonds."
Then "Get thee quick to horse, and look not back,
Or death will overtake thee: tell your master
That for our captive chief, his son shall die;
Go tell him," (and he whirled a lighted brand,
With savage exultation in the air)
"Tell him that Telico, I, lit the fire."
Hoping they might suspend their damned rights,
I sprung upon my steed and spurr'd him hard;
But, as I bore the tidings fleetly on,
The savage war-song burst upon mine ear;
And oft between —

Gons. Proceed, I know the worst.

Per. The shriek of agony —

Gons. Then they are dead —
Go ring the alarum — summon all the troops.

Hold, 'tis too late— I rave — It cannot be —
'Twill but redeem their half-consumed bones.
Merciless devils! — Men! No, they are devils —
Without a cause to murder in cold blood!
Yet thou art in my gripe, and I will *plague* thee.

Raym. Will that revive them? will my flowing
Blood their empty veins replenish? will my groans,
(If I should groan) erect the ear of death?

Gons. Bear him to prison.

Raym. You may extinguish life,
But cannot give it e'en unto the worm,
Which your poor malice tramples on. [*Exit guarded.*

Gons. (*After a pause.*) Abdallah,
I do but call, and thou art quick as thought,
To do thy master's bidding. — I have mark'd
Thy forward zeal, and will reward thee. — What,
If I should give thee liberty — (*He falls at the Governor's feet.*)
Nay, rise.

Abd. What, make me free?

Gons. I do not jest; once more
I'll put thine honest service to the proof,
And having done the thing, thou'rt free as air.

Abd. Name it, that I may fly. What is it? Quick!

Gons. To kill this Indian.

Abd. (*After a struggle.*) My liberty?

Gons. For ever.

Abd. Murder him? (*Aside.*)

Shall I go back to my own country, sir?

Gons. Ay.

Abd. Once more behold the spot
Where I was born; and when I die, be buried
Where all my father's sleep. And yet, to kill him—
(*Aside.*)

Gons. Are you resolved?

Abd. Well—how?

Gons. When he's asleep
A single blow dispatches him.

Abd. I'll do it.

Gone. Or you may drug his cup.

Abd. That will be better.

Gons. Quick, then, to thy task;
And when it shall be whisper'd in mine ear
That thou hast thrown his carcase in the sea,
I am no more thy master.

Abd. I'll about it. [*Exit.*

GONSALVO *solus.*

Yet what avails it me when he is gone?
I am at most a miserable man;
A tree that put two blooming branches forth,
Of which the nobler is for ever wither'd,
And that which lives grows crooked and perverse,

To plague the trunk it springs from. My poor boy!
Perhaps they have not kill'd him. Perhaps,
Out of their very cruelty, they've spared
For fiercer tortures still his mangled form.
Yet I will hunt these monsters to their den.
Perez can track them. He may yet survive:
Or if extinguish'd quite, like Afric's kings
Who have their monuments of human skulls,
I'll build him up a pile of Indian dead,
That shall commemorate the inhuman deed. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Wood.

Enter ZOA, *leading* ALMANZA.

Zoa. This is my habitation. Thou shalt sleep
Sound and secure beneath its humble roof;
Whilst, like a bird that circles round its young,
I will keep danger from thee. [*They go into the hut.*

FERNANDEZ *and* FLORIO.

Fern. Are you mad, Florio?

Flor. Not absolutely mad; but so desperately in love on a sudden, that I would give one of my eyes for a ten minutes tête à tête with her.

Fern. You are more likely to part with both your ears; that's the settled price for a lady's favours here.

Flor. Yes, for the favours of a married lady; but one may be decently civil to a maid, without losing any thing but one's heart.

Fern. True, but my sister has your heart, you know.

Flor. Well, and that's as much of a man as a reasonable woman can expect before marriage. Look'e, Fernandez, I love thy sister as a woman ought to be loved; but I am not one of those unmerciful gallants who think the best proof of their attachment to one lady is absolute rudeness to the rest of the sex. I should be in love with thy sister only, 'tis true, but then I may be in charity with all women. (*Looking into the hut.*) How unfortunate that there should be two of them. Well, there are two of us. If her friend, now, would only have the good breeding to—by heavens, the very thing. Stand back, Fernandez, stand back, I say, and don't spoil the only opportunity that may ever offer us, of learning how the ladies like to be made love to in this part of the world.

Enter Zoa *from the hut.*

Zoa. Yes, I will watch thee like the bird of night,
That, having hous'd his victim, shrieks aloud,
And in the drowsy twilight flaps his wings
To scare away the lonely passenger. [*Exit.*

Fern. She seems angry, I think.

Flor. Yes, they have been quarrelling for me: but as they have settled the point at last, you have only to follow your good fortune, and leave me to pursue mine.

Fern. Farewell, then. Yet, for heaven's sake remember, your life depends on your good conduct.

[*Exit.*

Flor. I had much rather it depended upon any thing else. (*Looks into the hut.*) Not yet asleep; but certainly preparing for her siesta. She looks quite fatigued: has been buffalo hunting, I suppose: rather a powerful exercise for the fair sex. Pray, heaven, she be a spinster; for they tell me these Indians make no more ceremony of cropping a man's ears close to his head, than we do in trimming a terrier puppy. (*Goes into the hut.*)

The Interior of the Hut.

Alm. If I well observed his looks, Florio would be shewing his gallantry. He shan't know me, however, till I see whether I'm my own rival.

FLORIO *enters, she starts.*

Flor. Don't be frightened, lady: 'tis but a man; a very young one; who, being a stranger in this part of

the world, and having an insurmountable curiosity to see the inside of an Indian hut, has taken the liberty to introduce himself. If I have offended, I'll retire.

Alm. Oh no. I'll see the extent of his curiosity, however. (*Aside.*)

Flor. Now to learn whether she be married. (*Aside.*) Perhaps I have chosen an unseasonable hour—you may expect the return of a jealous husband?

Alm. No.

Flor. Why is it possible you are not married?

Alm. Very possible.

Flor. My ears are safe, however. (*Aside.*) But still you may be waiting for some favour'd lover?

Alm. No, I did'nt expect him.

Flor. Then you have a lover perhaps?

Alm. Yes, but he cares not for poor Abacoa.

Flor. Inconstant! here's an opening. (*Aside.*) And can he bear the pangs of absence?

Alm. Oh, yes, without breaking his heart; for though he left me not an hour ago, and swore eternal truth and constancy (as they tell me you Spaniards do), yet I dare say, by this time, he's making love to the first woman he meets.

Flor. Your suspicions wrong him: those eyes — that shape — that complexion ——

Alm. Complexion! Oh, fye, fye; praise an Indian girl for her complexion! I thought you Spaniards flatter'd with more judgment.

Flor. Then, as I hope to be saved, though the women of our country have some advantages, yet in point of complexion there's no comparison; you alone bear the original stamp of nature: the first women she made were precisely of your colour; but whether she exhausted her materials, or lost her art, I protest I can't tell, but she has ever since been blundering into the two opposite extremes, and has produced nothing but black and white ones.

Alm. Well, that's ingenious — what would you have said to me, had I been fair?

Flor. Umph — You know we must say something civil upon these occasions — I should have talked of roses and lilies, and auburn and alabaster, and celestial blue; but, upon my soul, I should not have admired you half so much. But is it possible your lover can be inconstant?

Alm. Even so — what must I do with him?

Flor. Endeavour to reform him: if you find him incorrigible, you have nothing then left for it, but to follow his example.

Alm. Oh fie!

Flo. Nay, if in spite of all you can say, he is

determined to make love to the first woman he meets, what have you to do but, if you should like him, to fall in love with the first man you meet.

Alm. Will you be my lover then?

Flor. With the greatest pleasure.

Alm. But will you be my husband too?

Flor. Husband! Pray, madam, how long do marriages last in your country?

Alm. No longer than affection.

Flor. Why that in most European states would be a very reasonable time: pray how long is it here?

Alm. Only till death.

Flor. Umph—that is rather an unreasonable time; but if you and I should marry, will it be necessary we should like together so long?

Alm. Oh, no! by no means.

Flor. I'll be passionately fond of you whilst I stay in this part of the country.

Alm. I shall expect no more.

Flor. And you will be content to take me upon those terms?

Alm. Most gladly.

Flor. Upon my soul the women here understand common sense. (*Aside.*)

Alm. But you must leave me now.

Flor. Leave you?

Alm. Yes, immediately.

Flor. But when shall I see you again?

Alm. To-night, perhaps; if not, early to-morrow.

Flor. Nay, let it be to-night.

Alm. Well, well, but leave me now.

Flor. This is confoundedly tantalizing. *(Aside.)* Farewell, I forget your name tho'.

Alm. Abacoa.

Flor. Abacoa: a very pretty name. We must part in the European fashion. *(Kisses her.)* Who would suppose her to be a *Catabaw* by the taste of her lips. [*Exit.*

Alm. alone. This may produce excellent sport, but now to rest. I'll dream of some device to punish him for thus letting me seduce him from myself.

[*Exit.*

Scene, a Prison.

RAYMOND *sleeping.*—ABDALLAH *enters with a dagger, and listens.*

Abd. Soundly he sleeps: the blow were easy now, yet should I strike amiss and wake him. Ha!

[*He retires.* RAYMOND *starts from his sleep.*

Raym. Away; I will not go: unlock my hand,

For thou art death. Am I awake? amazement!
'Twas but an apparition, one of those
That rouse the sleeping faculties of man,
To mock his waking apprehension.
I have beheld in my distemper'd rest
Forms of all shape and colour, but a thing
So grossly palpable to sight as that:
Never brush'd off oblivion from my lids.
What lurking friend art thou? (*Seeing* ABDALLAH.)

Abd. It is Abdallah,
The slave who waits on you. Pray now employ me,
Do you want nothing? Let me fetch you drink.

Raym. 'Tis strange you should intrude your offices,
And, like a worm, crawl to be trod upon.

Abd. What can I do?

Raym. If you will be a slave
I would have drink: my tongue cleaves to my palate,
A glass of water, and I'll thank thee, fellow.

Abd. Now then, or never. (*Aside.*)

Raym. How the rogue bestirs him.

(ABDALLAH *returns, and brings poison in wine.*)

Raym. That is not water.

Abd. No, 'tis wine, 'twill cheer
Thy sinking heart, and make it dance with joy.

Raym. I will have none on't, 'tis the damned juice
That makes fools idcots, and the quick-brain'd mad.

Your European poison, well no matter. (*Takes the*
What is the reason that you tremble thus? *cup.*)
And your teeth chatter, and the sweat starts from thee,
Your knees each other smite, your eyes draw inward,
Your *woolly locks uncurl and stand erect.*
What ails thee fellow?

Abd. (*Trembling.*) Nothing.

Raym. Then 'tis so. (*Aside.*)
What's in the cup? It is a damned draught,
And I will pledge thee.

(ABDALLAH *falls prostrate.*)

Poison, on my life.

(ABDALLAH *kneels in a supplicating posture.*)

Raym. Kneel not to me.

Abd. Oh, yes! till you forgive me.

Raym. Who set you on? the governor? 'twas he,
He promis'd thee reward?

Abd. Yes, great reward, my liberty.

Raym. Poor fellow!

Abd. He told me I should see again my country,
That I should die at home, and lay my bones
Beneath the tree I planted.

Raym. I forgive thee.
To have escap'd from thy condition,
And be a man again, I might have done
Deeds horrible to think on. I forgive thee.

Come, give me drink, I do not fear thee now.
See that it be pure water from the spring.
(ABDALLAH *goes out.*)
This governor to steal man's birthright from him,
And bribe him with't to shed his fellow's blood.
(ABDALLAH *returns.*)
Ay, this looks well—thy tread is firm and even,
Thou bear'st thyself erect, thine hand is steady.
There's honest gratulation in thine eye:
Here is no poison. Each proud look and gesture
Pourtrays the noble image of a man,
Who holds the cup of comfort to his fellow.
Pleasure may dance in her full cup of wine,
Health sparkles here. (*Drinks.*) But will the governor
Forgive thee too?

Abd. If you would trust me.

Raym. Well. (ABDALLAH *opens a trap door.*)
Where does that lead?

Abd. Out on the shore.
Those who have died here—

Raym. Or been murder'd?

Abd. Ay, their bodies this way have been carried out,
And thrown at midnight in the sea. The dead

Have found a passage here, why not the living,
If you would trust me?

Raym. Lead, I'll follow thee.

(ABDALLAH *gives him a dagger.*)

Abd. Take this, it is a better pledge than words.
If I prove false you know to sheath it right.
Tarry a moment here, I'll bring a light. [*Exit.*

Raym. If this should be an after plot of murder,
The first act having fail'd — yet why bring light
To do a deed of darkness, or why arm
My arm with vengeance if his thoughts are evil?

(ABDALLAH *enters with a torch.*)

Abd. Now, are you ready?

Raym. Down, I'll follow thee.

(*As they descend.*)

Abd. The way is dark and narrow.

Raym. Quick, proceed. I will not shrink.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Scene 1st. — A Wood; on one side the habitation of RAYMOND.

Enter RAYMOND *and* ABDALLAH.

Raym. No further, yonder is my hut: return
To tell Gonsalvo you have done the deed,
And with to-morrow's sun, salute me here.
Farewell!—at sunrise —
Abd. I'll be here before:
I shall not sleep for thinking that to-morrow
Will make me free. [*Exit.*
Raym. Why what a heart must that Gonsalvo have?
Who from thy body would erase God's image,
And fix the weight of murder on thy soul.
Now will I gently steal upon my love,
And wake to wand'ring rapture all her senses.
How, there are two? the other sleeps whilst Zoa
Hangs in such earnest contemplation o'er her
As she would read her dreams: and see, she weeps,
As if in pity: 'tis not so, for now
In scorn she brushes off the struggling tears,
And with a frown upbraids them.
What can this mean? there is some horrid mischief

In her quick motions and disordered looks,
I'll watch the working on't. [*Enters the hut.*

Scene 2d. — *The inside of the hut.*

ALMANZA *asleep*, ZOA (*as listening.*)

Zoa. Now, all is still:
Yon moon approves the deed, else in the clouds
That float around she'd hide her conscious head:
No hour so meet as midnight's breathless pause,
No altar like the couch she would defile.
Nay now perhaps, in her adulterous dreams,
She thinks on Raymond.—I will wake her first,
Halloo her name, that startling from her sleep
She may confess herself, and leave no doubt
That this is her true image.—Hoa, Almanza! Almanza, hoa!

Alm. Who calls? (*Starting up.*)

Zoa. 'Tis I; awake,
And take such greeting as the wife of Raymond
Should give to Raymond's friend.
(*She lifts her hatchet to strike.*)

Raym. (*Holding her hand.*) Woman, art mad?

Alm. Would she have killed me?

Zoa. Ay, I am not mad,
It is the governor's daughter, is it not?

Alm. It is, indeed.

Raym. Amazement!

Zoa. Nay, 'tis she,
Your prison comforter, look not so strange,
"It is a place well suited to her sex;"
And when she could not bless thee with herself,
You had this painted likeness of her still
To soothe the pangs of absence.

Raym. (*Snatches the picture.*) What is this?

Zoa. The thing you gave to Telico.

Raym. 'Tis false;
I never saw it, by my soul, till now.

Zoa. You gave't him not?

Raym. Never.

Alm. It is the picture which I gave to Florio.
When he departed for the chace to-day,
He wore it round his neck.

Zoa. Nay, are you sure?

Alm. Very, for when at distance he took leave,
He press'd it to his heart, and rais'd it thence
To meet his lips, which bow'd to do it homage:
Then sprung upon his steed and hurried off.

Zoa. (*After a pause.*) I will not live then.
(*Snatching up the hatchet.*)

Alm. Nay, 'twas madness, all
Your senses were disordered.

Zoa. Talk not of it,
The bare suggestion now is freezing horror.
The perpetration—no, I will not live,
Cover me, night, with thy obscurest hell,
Nor let the rising of another sun
Shine full upon my shame; nay, let me go,
Yet 'tis not done. There is no blood upon you,
I feel your pulses play—your eye beams life.
I hear you softly breathe too,—all is well:
I did but lift my hand.

Alm. No more of that.

Zoa. I would weep, lady, but my burning shame
Consumes my tears; nay, I would not ask forgiveness,
If that could be—but at a deed like this,
Mercy would snatch th' uplifted sword from justice,
And without shrinking, strike!

Alm. No more of this,
You have my full forgiveness. (*They embrace.*)

Zoa. Ay, but Raymond,
What shall I say to you?

Raym. Why, nothing now.
Had I the time I'd chide you, but the night
Teams with more horrid prodigies than this.
Come, I will lead you where a deeper wonder
Shall swallow up the sense of what has past,
In horrible amazement. Come. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, a Wood.

GONSALVO *and Spaniards.*

Gons. We must be near them now, yet all is still,
Perez, you mark'd the spot?

Perez. Yes, my lord, we are within
A stone's throw of it.

Gons. Hark! who comes?

(ABDALLAH *hails them from without.*)

Perez. It is the slave Abdallah. (*He enters.*)

Abd. Yes, 'tis he.

(*The other Spaniards retire, and leave* ABDALLAH *and* GONSALVO.)

Gons. Well, is he dead?

Abd. Yes.

Gons. Did you poison him?

Abd. No, stabb'd him as he slept.

Gons. Good! and the body?

Abd. Thrown into the sea.

Gons. There let it sink or swim: to-morrow's sun
Lights thee to liberty.
Now Spaniards on, th' accursed spot is near,
Tread softly, where with unwash'd hands they lie,
And faces grim with human sacrifice,
Yet pause a moment—should his mangled limbs—

My boy! my boy! tho' by the moon's pale light
Gleam on mine eyes: well they shall rouse my vengeance.
Come. [*Exeunt.*

(*The Creeks steal from their ambush on all sides, and* TELICO *and* POTOWMAK *come forward.*)

Tel. (*To* POTOWMAK.) Stabb'd in his sleep: didst hear?

Pot. Had I been deaf, those words had broke the spell.

Tel. Yet 'twas foul play: this hatchet should have done it.

Pot. No matter, since 'tis done: he sleeps sound for ever.

Tel. Yes, we are sleeping too, these Spaniards say:
Silent we are, and dark, but not to sleep;—
Couch'd in the rustling grass — but not to sleep:—
Close ambush'd in the tree — yet not to sleep:—
Or, if we must repose, we do not lie
Stretch'd at full length to doze our surfeit out,
Like dull white fools: we close our eyes, indeed,
Yet, fearfully, our senses still keep watch,
Quick to alarm, and start at distant perils,
Which, broad awake, these Spaniards would not dream of.

Now on them silent, and invisible
Steal like the night dew. [*Exeunt Creeks.*

(*The Creeks return, with the Spaniards prisoners.*)

Tel. Bring them along. You would have caught us sleeping;
Like vermin, on the roost have suck'd our blood.
The mighty hunters are for once the spoil.
Well, if you had surpris'd us sunk in slumber,
What had our doom been?

Gons. Death! merciful death,
Compared with your inflictions: ye had died
Untortured, at a blow.

Tel. I understand ye.

(*Makes a sign to one of the Creeks, who retires.*)

Gons. What can he mean by that?

Tel. If we had slept,
Ungrasp'd these tomahawks, these bows unstrung,
Ye would have made our passing rest eternal:
Upon death's image stampt your noble vengeance;
Then, o'er the dead, clapp'd your triumphant wings,
And crow'd your mighty victory: such had been
Your mercy, had you found us unprepared;
Now, witness ours.

The Creeks enter with FERNANDEZ *and* FLORIO.

Gons. Alive!—Yes, 'tis my boy.

(*Goes to embrace them.*)

Tel. (*Stopping him.*) A moment's patience, sir:
these are our captives;
Fresh in complexion still, and sound in limb;
Look at them well; you will not find a hair
Of either touch'd, or a scratch on their white skins:
You have a prisoner, sir, of ours: a brave one.
Now burst the dungeon that our chief entombs,
And lead him forth unalter'd. What, you cannot.
You've put him to the torture? Well, no matter:
Come bring him forth with dislocated bones;
If life breathes in him, all may yet be well.
Still do you hang the head? Then he is murder'd:
Poison'd perhaps, or — butcher'd in his sleep!
Why do your haggard eyes thus cleave to the earth;
He is not there: you'll find him in the waters.

Gons. (*After a pause.*) Merciful heav'n! who sent the message?

Tel. I.

Gons. What, that my son was tortur'd?

Tel. Yes, I sent it.

Gons. Wherefore?

Tel. That Raymond's body, as thou doom'dst it,
Might glut the ocean cannibals.

Gons. Thou fiend!

Fern. Horrible!

Flor. Who ever heard of such a devil!

Gons. Oh, Raymond! Raymond!

Tel. Shall I call him for thee? ——
Raymond, awake! 'tis thine assassin calls;
The noble Spaniard who did stab thee sleeping,
By yonder trembling victim of his power,
Would breath back life into thy mortal wounds.
He will not hear. Raymond, awake!
The wat'ry shroud shake off,
That dins about thine ears; and, like the sun,
Kindling anew from thy sepulchral waves,
Spread forth reanimate. ——

Enter RAYMOND, ZOA, *and* ALMANZA.

Thou? or thy spirit?

Raym. It is no apparition.

Tel. Would it were.

Gons. (*To* ABDALLAH.) Did you not tell me, slave ——

Raym. He is no slave.
His freedom was the price for shedding blood,
Shall he have less for sparing it? Potowmak —
Telico — what can you say?

Pot. Nothing.

Raym. (*To* TELICO.) You, sir?

Tel. I was not born to speak at thy commands.
Somewhat thine unexpected presence moved me,

For which, whilst living, I shall spurn myself;
But that is past.

Raym. Wilt live, and be my friend?

Tel. Never, for I can die thine enemy.

Raym. How have I wrong'd thee?

Tel. Thou hast a white complexion —
Art chieftain of the Creeks —which I would be:
And wouldst be their first warrior — which I am.
But words are idle.

Gons. Let him speak in groans then.

Tel. Curses, you mean. An Indian utter groans!
It is a language which my mother knew not,
And could not teach it to her son.
'Tis like enough that, with my parting breath,
I may hiss curses thro' my clenched teeth:
But groans — no, never! thro' these closing eyes
My spirit shall look forth with fix'd disdain;
Nor henceforth will I utter more than this —
Living, I hate, and dying, will despise thee.

[*Exeunt* TELICO *and* POTOWMAK, *with Creeks.*

Raym. Which of you is Florio?

Flor. I'll answer to that name till I've done something to be asham'd of it.

Raym. The rest are free: you, sir, must stay with us.

Flor. Pray, sir, have you taken a particular fancy to me?

Raym. Know you this Indian girl? (*Taking* ALMANZA *by the hand, and shewing her to him.*)

Flor. Know her, sir? Yes, sir —— that is to say, I do not know her; or, to speak more correctly, I know very little about her.

Raym. She claims you as her husband.

Flor. Indeed, sir: she does me a great deal of honour: but there's another lady, named Donna Almanza, daughter to that gentleman, who has a prior claim upon me in that capacity; and as neither your laws nor ours will suffer a gentleman to double the blessings of matrimony, I can't possibly indulge both the ladies.

Alm. You'll contrive that very well, I dare say. (*Aside.*)

Raym. (*To* ALMANZA.) Did he not promise to marry you?

Alm. Oh, yes, and swore great oaths.

Flor. Nay, I did make a sort of promise; but curse me if I swore: besides, we were only in jest. Come, come, be an honest wench; and confess we were only in jest.

Alm. Oh, no, it was no jest.

Flor. Then, as I hope to be saved, 'twas a jest.

Raym. In jest or earnest, you must wed her, sir.

Flor. Well, well, I have no objection to marry the lady in jest; but there, with your permission, the jest shall end.

Raym. It is no joke. We have a custom, sir,
And custom is our law, (which, to oppose,
Is but to rear a bulrush 'gainst the flood)
That any one (no matter of what nation)
Who promises an Indian maid his love,
Shall, as her husband, make that promise good.

Gons. So, so, I may get rid of him, however. (*Aside.*)

Flor. Nay, my dear sir, I knew you had certain laws with respect to the married ladies; but I thought maids were left to govern themselves.

Raym. (*To* GONSALVO.) Then I appeal to you, sir; tho' a Spaniard. You have a daughter.

Gons. Yes.

Raym. Suppose a case, then.

Flor. Oh, my cursed vivacity. (*Aside.*)

Raym. Suppose a smooth gallant,
Handsome as this may be, with soft-breath'd speech,
And other gentle practices of love,
Stole to your daughter's heart — as you're a father,
And jealous of the honour of your child,

Were you in judgment sitting on this man,
What would your judgment be?

Gons. 'Tis a hard question.
If, as 'tis urg'd, and has not been denied,
If with fair seeming honourable love
He entertain'd her, and the hope of marriage,
Then, as a father, jealous of the honour
Of my own child, in this poor Indian girl —
But hold — her parents have consented? ——

Flor. Right, sir, a very excellent question: you would not, I am sure, let me marry your daughter without your consent.

Raym. They have consented.

Flor. Perhaps, sir, by this time they have chang'd their mind.

Gons. Why, then, I think,
In honour and in conscience, as by law,
Florio is bound to make the maid his wife.

Raym. (*Takes* ALMANZA'S *hand, and leads her to* FLORIO.) Come, your hand, sir.
What, you refuse! — Prepare the stake.

Flor. Refuse — oh, no! — The stake! — That is, don't absolutely refuse —

Raym. D'ye hear. (*To the Creeks.*)

Flor. Not immediately, if you please, gentlemen. A word with the lady, by your leave. Madam, as

you are determined to make a happy man of me, whether I will or no, it is but candid I should give you a slight sketch of the joys we are likely to experience.

Alm. Oh, I could listen to that voice for ever.

Raym. Come, sir.

Flor. Well, sir, I give — no, I don't give it, but there is my hand.

(*She takes his hand, and leads him to the Governor.*)

Alm. Your blessing and forgiveness, sir.

Gons. How!

Alm. Your daughter, sir.

Fern. My sister!

Flor. Almanza!

Gons. This is a trick.

Raym. An honest one, sir.
You have passed sentence like a righteous judge;
Now, like a father, see it executed.

Gons. Well, well, I see Fortune will have it so,
And I consent.

Alm. Why, Florio, still amazed?

Flor. Yes: by this light, or rather by this darkness, thou art she; and for this jade's trick thou hast played, in forcing me to marry the woman I adore, I will love thee most unmercifully.

Alm. What, you will beat me, then?

Flor. No; though I shall almost love thee well enough, I will restrain the violence of my affection, and not beat thee.

Alm. That is, if I shall be content with a half, or a quarter, or a tenth, or a ——

Flor. Nay, you shall have me all.

Alm. I don't expect that; yet I will never quarrel with thine inconstancy, if, when thou stealest affection from Almanza, thou wilt give it to Abacoa.

Raym. Now we will see you to the boundary.
At distance, 'twixt the Spaniards and the Creeks
There may be friendship still, but nothing farther.
Come, we will see you safe there. [*Exeunt.*

THE END.

YOUR'S or MINE,

A COMIC OPERA.

IN THREE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JUSTICE FIDGET.
JUSTICE SPARROWHAWKE.
CAPTAIN CONSTANT.
CARELESS, his Friend, Nephew to Justice Fidget.
O'BLARNEY, an Irish Schoolmaster, and Clerk to both Justices.
STURDY, an Innkeeper and Farmer.
TODDY, Servant to Constant.
Servants, &c.

SOPHIA, Daughter to Fidget.
GRACE, Sister to Constant.
SUSAN, MAID to Sophia.
Servants, &c.

Scene, a Village.—Time, the Performance.

YOUR'S OR MINE.

ACT I.

Scene, a Village.

Enter TODDY.

Tod. So here I am, once more quartered in my own native village; and if ever I believe a recruiting serjeant again, when he tells me there's no danger in fighting, may I be scalp't by a Cherokee Indian, or broiled alive by a cannibal cook.

AIR 1st.

I.

I had heard of the pleasures of war and campaigning,
And much of the honour and beauty of scars,
So Tim Jolter and I, peace and quiet disdaining,
Determin'd like heroes, to list for the wars.

The drum and the fife beat to arms thro' the village,
Tim's wife was heart-broke, but I bad her not cry.
Whilst he kiss'd off the tear as it stood in her eye;
Like a couple of ninnies,
We took the king's guineas,
And left our sweet hamlet, for plunder and pillage.

II.

In drilling, we soon found our torments began,
'Twixt my shoulders and head, such a sympathy rose,
That they never would part, so I got the rattan,
And Tim, for his soul, could'nt turn out his toes:
We soon curs'd the day, the drum beat thro' the village,
When Tim's wife, &c.

III.

Spite of oatmeal and flour, my hair stood on end,
When the battle on both sides, was set in array,
A twenty-four pounder soon settled my friend,
And I was found missing, the very next day.
And now fifty drums may alarum the village,
I want courage perhaps, yet I'll not stir a peg,
For I don't want an arm, and I don't want a leg:
And whilst from the misses,
I ravish sweet kisses,
I'll envy not heroes their plunder and pillage.

O'BLARNEY *crosses the back of the stage.*

Tod. Sure I know that face, why O'Blar —

O'Blar. Why Toddy, and is it your own self now?

Tod. Why you look at me, as if I was altered a little.

O'Blar. Faith that may be without a miracle: the man who goes to the wars, is more likely to be altered than he who stays at home.

Tod. You are right, and if I had taken your advice, I should have staid at home too; not that I minded the danger, but the noise of the great guns always gave me a head-ache.

O'Blar. The heart-ach you mean, I suppose; but it's nearly the same thing.

Tod. Well, O'Blarney, are you still clerk to the justice?

O'Blar. Clerk to two justices, besides being a bit of a retail potatoe merchant.

Tod. And do you keep on your school?

O'Blar. My school? To be sure, when you left us, it was but a school, but you'll please to remember that now it's an academy.

Tod. And have you plenty of scholars?

O'Blar. More than I can teach, more than I can teach; especially, since I have began to puzzle them with a new grammar of my own invention — in which you see, without bothering their tender understand-

ings with eight or nine parts of speech, I have made it as clear as the Liffey, that the devil a part of speech is there but one, and that's the tongue which every man (and man, you know, includes woman of course) carries in his own head. — You shall just peep in upon me one morning, and see me teach the English languish in it's purity, at fourteen-pence a week, besides giving them a pretty strong twang of the Irish into the bargain. — But come, you see the Blackamoor's Head stands just where it did, tho' one of my little urchins the other day knock'd off his nose; sha'nt we drink a glass or two to our old friendship?

Tod. Yes, and a bottle or two to our new acquaintance.

O'Blar. To be sure we wont — for the wind being south-west, I have given my little disciples a holiday.

Tod. What, because the wind was south-west?

O'Blar. I'll tell you — you see there's an old trout at the mill-tail, I have wanted to catch for this month past; I had call'd my little fellows together, to hear them their evening tasks, when I caught little Tommy Truant looking up at the weathercock in the church-yard. I had flogg'd him the day before, for having his stockings about his heels, for as I said to

him; if I catch you again with your stockings about your heels, your brogues shall soon follow their example: there he was, looking up earnestly at the weathercock. — You had better turn that graceless face of yours, upon your dirty dog's-leav'd book, my young master, said I; but in less than a minute, I caught him looking up at the weathercock again, and then he look'd at me, and then I look'd at the weathercock; and there it was sure enough, it stood south-west as it could blow. Thought I to myself, are you in that quarter at last, and be damn'd to you? So I proclaimed silence: — My little men, said I, you have all lately been very good boys; and as it seems to be a fine evening for walking, said I, looking up to see the wind hadn't chang'd again, you may all take the fag-end of it for a holiday.

Tod. Why then I'll just step to deliver a letter. (*Feels for it.*) Oh, I must have put it into the other pocket — why, what the devil's become of it?

O'Blar. What have you lost?

Tod. A letter from my master to his mistress — come, come, you have taken it out of my pocket.

O'Blar. Not a word of it.

Tod. What the devil's to be done?

O'Blar. Done — write another yourself.

Tod. Impossible, my parents gave me an excellent

education, but somehow or other, they forgot writing and reading.

O'Blar. Never mind it, I'll give you one of my grammars, where you may learn both at the same time.—Don't be alarm'd, I'll write you a letter.

Tod. Will you?

O'Blar. I have said it.

Tod. But can you?

O'Blar. Can I? Go back to where you dropt the letter, and then meet me at the Blackamoor's Head.

Tod. Grant heaven I may find it, for if I return without an answer, I shall certainly be murdered.

[*Exit.*

O'Blar. (*solus*) Whether I can write a love-letter? Faith, by his doubting that, one would almost suppose he had heard of the small misfortune that I met with in my own country.

AIR 2d.

I.

In the town of Kilkenny, I once kept a school,
Where I sat like a gander 'mongst ducks in a pool,
Spare the rod, spoil the child, is a maxim quite right,
So I whip'd them all round of a Saturday night.
It was physick, before they were sick, to be sure,
But you know that prevention is better than cure;

And you'll find it the sooner, the deeper you search,
That the great tree of knowledge they talk of, was birch:
If you'd quicken the wit, let the diet be spare,
So faith, of starvation, they had a full share;
Tho' their bellies might grumble out — non quantum suff.
Yet no one could say, but their backs had enough.

II.

Thus I taught them, till told by an impudent elf,
I had better begin, by first learning myself,
For he swore that my impudence couldn't be small,
To set up in a business with no stock at all;
My boys took the hint, and I caught an arch rogue,
With a grin on his face, slily smoking my brogue;
They broke my best cane, burnt my wig to the call,
And scribbled "O'Blarney's a dunce" on the wall.
So I lock'd up my school room, and wrote on the door,
"The devil may teach here, for I teach no more;
"And that he may know how to get in with ease,
"If he breaks the door open, he'll soon find the keys."
[*Exit.*

Scene, another part of the Village.

Enter GRACE CONSTANT.

AIR 3d.

I.

Fair to the shepherd's anxious eye,
Tho' storms succeed, doth glow,
Amid' the half-relumin'd sky,
The many-colour'd bow.

II.

So hope's fond dreams still sooth despair,
And tho' we wake to pain,
So warmly bright her visions are,
We wish to sleep again.

How sweetly custom teaches us to reap comfort from adversity, as the bird gathers the down that warms his humble dwelling, from the thistle that wounds his breast. The fifteen months I have spent in the service of this honest man — but he comes.

Enter STURDY.

Stur. Two strangers have alighted at the house.

Gra. I wish I had been there to attend them.

Stur. Perhaps it's as well as 'tis: they are young, and you are handsome. I take them for a couple of London sparks; gentlemen who have too much pride to marry a poor girl, yet sufficient condescension to ruin, and just spirit enough to desert her.

Gra. I hope you are mistaken, sir.

Stur. I hope so too. I have been so often deceived in my good opinion of mankind, that I'm always heartily glad to be honestly ashamed of a bad one: but come, we'll talk more of them as we go along.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, a Room in Justice FIDGET'S *House.*

Enter SOPHIA *and* SUSAN.

Sus. Well, madam, and how did you and the old gentleman settle the affair at last?

Soph. I have agreed to marry the lawyer, in case upon further acquaintance he should like me.

Sus. And how will you prevent his liking you?

Soph. I have a scheme for that, which I have been for some time putting in execution; but run and see who the fellow is, that you say is lurking about the house.

Sus. Yes, ma'am, he wants to speak with some of

the female part of it, I'll be sworn; so I'll just give him a decent opportunity, and be back immediately.

[*Exit* SUSAN.

Soph. If it should be a messenger from Constant; yet I dare not expect it. The pangs of disappointment are too severe a penance for the indulgence of hope.

AIR 4th.

The flow'r enamour'd of the sun,
At his departure hangs her head and weeps,
And shrouds her sweetness up, and keeps
Sad vigils, like a cloister'd nun,
Till his reviving ray appears,
Waking her beauty as he dries her tears.

Enter SUSAN.

Sus. I knew I was right, madam.

Soph. What have you got there?

Sus. Read madam, read; 'tis from Captain Constant,

Soph. Who told you so?

Sus. The man who brought it.

Soph. And what have you done with him?

(Opens the letter, and reads.)

Sus. Why, madam, I was some time in doubt whether I should put him into the pantry to assist Robin in scrubbing the plate, or lock him up with old Deborah

to make conserves; but concluding, that like the rest of the male creatures, he must have a natural partiality for our sex——Bless me, what's the matter? why you look as melancholy as if you had been reading a tragedy. I hope the captain is'nt false-hearted?

Soph. Let me see the messenger.

Sus. Yes, madam; he's certainly false-hearted after all!

Soph. What am I to think of this? 'tis not Constant's hand, and the contents are absolute nonsense; yet this is about the time I expected him.

Enter SUSAN *and* TODDY.

Sus. This, sir, is my lady.

Soph. Leave me, Susan.

Sus. What, with a strange man, madam? I can't think of that.

Soph. Well, well, shut the door then. You brought this letter from Captain Constant?

Tod. Yes, madam.

Soph. Pray is it his writing, sir?

Tod. His writing? you know his writing, ma'am, I presume?

Soph. Perfectly.

Tod. Why then, madam, honestly to confess the

truth, tho' he swore me to secrecy, it is not his writing. My master, madam, owing to a trifling accident—

Soph. Accident! oh, heav'ns!

Tod. The mere fortune of war: the loss of an arm, upon such occasions—

Soph. Loss of an arm?

Tod. Very true, madam: in following the enemy too vigorously, a masqued battery opened upon us, and at the first discharge my master lost his right arm; but take comfort, madam; don't be distress'd; he has got as handsome a wooden one.

Soph. A wooden one?

Tod. Yes, madam, and he moves it so naturally, that you'd hardly know it from flesh and blood. I was, as I said before, sworn to secrecy, but there's an openness in my disposition: I have my faults, but I never could tell a lie in my life.

Soph. But his intellects, sir?

Tod. Madam!

Sus. What does the man gape at? Is your master in his right senses?

Tod. An excellent hint. *(Aside.)*

Soph. You understand me, is he perfectly rational?

Tod. He's in love, madam.

Soph. But is he in his perfect senses?

Tod. As much so as most gentlemen in that unfor-

tunate situation: for an instance, he call'd me to him this morning, and looking as I thought rather wildly, Toddy, says he, sit down and write. He then dictated to me, verbatim, the letter I brought; then suddenly starting up, and hitting his forehead with his wooden hand, at the same time catching me by the throat with the other, False, cruel, perjur'd fair! says he; you shall now pay dear for all your treachery. With that, madam, he squeez'd me by the throat, till he almost stopt my windpipe, when, finding by the hoarseness of my voice and the roughness of my chin, I was not a false perjur'd fair, he begged my pardon, I must own, in a very gentlemanly manner, and bade me hasten here with the letter.

Soph. Poor Constant!

Sus. Poor gentleman!

Tod. Poor gentleman indeed.

Sop. Well, sir, if you'll contrive to make yourself comfortable in the kitchen, I'll write an answer.

Tod. The kitchen! lord, madam, I'm a man of so humble a spirit, I should'nt have been offended if you had mentioned the cellar.

Soph. (*To* SUSAN.) You'll see him taken care of. (*Exeunt* SUSAN *and* TODDY.) Poor Constant! and is it thus, after so long a absence, we are to meet.

'Twould be better to feel the pangs of expectation still, than to see thee thus return'd. [*Exit.*

Scene, a Room in an Inn.

CONSTANT *and* CARELESS *sitting at a table.*

AIR 5th. (Duet.)

I.

Another glass, 'tis friendship's due,
Here's to all friends the world around,
But chiefly him, whose ardent soul
Can glow beneath the northern pole,
As o'er the salt wave, homeward bound,
He wafts an anxious thought of you.

II.

Another still, and then we'll part:
Here's to the girl thou lov'st most dear,
Who, when no chiding tongue is nigh,
Breathing for thee the midnight sigh,
Her glowing cheek wet with a tear,
In fancy folds thee to her heart.

Carel. So this scoundrel attorney is in quiet possession of your estate?

Cons. Even so; as my father declined in bodily

health, the soundness of his mind also became impaired; and he was worked upon by this rascal, who was then his steward, to disinherit my sister, and leave him the estate. The will was contested, but in vain; they could bring no proof that would reach him; and the bells you have heard ringing so merrily, are celebrating the anniversary of his victory. This I learnt from our host, who it seems is also a bit of a farmer. The best of the joke is, that thinking the estate securely his, my worthy steward has laid out some thousand pounds in improving it.

Carel. Excellent! Have you pick'd up any tidings of your sister?

Cons. Not a syllable; but I have learnt —

Carel. Well?

Cons. That Sophia, forgetting our long plighted and often renewed vows, has consented to marry this very wretch.

Carel. What, the attorney?

Cons. Sparrowhawke himself; but who comes here?

(Enter a boy.)

Boy. Is either of you Mr. Constant?

Cons. That's my name, my lad.

Boy. Then here's a letter for you; I brought it from a gentleman at the Blackamoor's Head — One Mr. Toddy, I think: he told me not to wait for an answer, so your servant. [*Exit.*

Cons. 'Tis her dear perfidious hand.

Carel. This, no doubt, will explain matters.

Cons. (*Reads.*) "Sophia condoles with Constant on his misfortunes." Misfortunes! "The loss of his arm she could have borne, but his other calamity has cut her to the *quick*." Loss of an arm! other calamity! Do you understand this?

Carel. Not a word; but read on, for a woman often delights in perplexing a man, for the pleasure of bringing him to a right understanding at last.

Cons. "She returns him his strange epistle, and will be happy to see him the first moment he feels himself equal to an interview;" why, what the devil is this? Read the letter; there it is; read it, and see if you can find any thing strange in it.

Carel. (*Reads.*) "Divinest of craters."

Cons. Psha! this is absurd.

Carel. Faith, it's absurd enough. "Divinest of craters."

Cons. Come, come, I'm not in a jesting humour.

Carel. Nor I; therefore as you wrote the letter, you had better read it yourself.

Cons. Why this isn't the letter I sent her?

Carel. Very likely, but it's the one she sent you.

Cons. (*Reads.*) "The thorns you have planted in my bosom have already grown to a quickset hedge. Fair virgin, be not guilty of manslaughter; but as

thou art the most perfect, preterperfect, and preterpluperfect of women, look on me with an eye of tenderness, lest I throw myself into the next horse pond, to prove how much I am over head and years in love. I look upon thee—

" Yea, as a modest inoffensive ass,
" Condemn'd, poor soul, to feed where once was grass,
" With outstretch'd neck and ears the paling over,
" Looks wistfully upon a field of clover."

Carel. 'Tis some mistake.

Coris. Mistake! what mistake? be it as it may, I'm determined to have an interview, for the tortures of suspence are insupportable.

AIR 6th. (Duet.)

Delusive hope, once more, adieu!
Thy pictures of delight,
Melt from my disenchanted view;
I wake, and all is night.
Thou, like the solitary ray
That cheers the dying captive's gloom,
Dost glitter only to betray,
That flushes his wan cheek and passes by,
Quick glancing on his closing eye,
To gild the horrors of his tomb.

[*Exit*

Carel. Well, surely to plague or to please a man, there has never been any thing invented like a woman. What shall I do with myself till Constant returns? Egad 'tis a fine morning, my landlord will lend me a dog and a gun, and I'll e'en take a sauntering survey of my friend's estate; but first, I have a strange curiosity to know something of this lovely girl that waits upon us: she appears the child of misfortune, and I pity her from my soul.

AIR 7th.

I.

Oh! would 'twere my lot to bring back to her bosom
The bliss that is sweeten'd from sorrow's alloy,
To watch on her pale cheek the roses re-blossom,
And waken the string that revibrates to joy.

II.

The heart long weigh'd down beats with keenest delight,
As it springs from the pressure of care,
And the eye with the fulness of rapture is bright,
When its spirit starts forth in a tear.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene, a Room at Lawyer SPARROWHAWKE's.

Enter CARELESS, *as from shooting, followed by a Servant.*

Serv. If you'll favour me with your name, sir, I'll inform my master immediately.

Carel. My name — psha; never mind my name: a stranger wishes to see him. (*Exit Servant.*) How will this rascal be astonished when the light breaks in upon him! Perhaps he'll be the only steward on record who ruined himself in improving his master's property.

Enter SPARROWHAWKE.

Sparr. Sir, your most obedient.

Carel. Sir, your very humble servant.

Sparr. Have you any business with me?

Carel. Not much. You've a very fine house, here, Mr. Sparrowhawke.

Sparr. Yes, I built the two wings to it myself; and, egad, as I sometimes whimsically say, they have flown away with my fortune.

Carel. A very pretty estate round about you.

Sparr. The completest, I believe, in the county.

Carel. They say you have laid out upwards of ten thousand pounds upon it.

Sparr. A strange fellow. (*Aside.*)

Carel. I wish you'd take a little more care of the game.

Sparr. Indeed!

Carel. For as I mean soon to take up my quarters here, for a month or six weeks at least ——

Sparr. The devil you do!

Carel. Perhaps longer.

Sparr. You mean to stay till you're invited, I presume?

Carel. Oh, no; I've a general invitation already.

Sparr. All the world may have invited you, but I'm sure I never did.

Carel. I beg pardon; you, I believe, are the owner of this princely mansion?

Sparr. I am.

Carel. You took it, I understand, under the will of the late Mr. Constant.

Sparr. Right.

Carel. It was entailed, I believe, upon a son of his, who died abroad?

Sparr. In the East Indies.

Carel. You may, perhaps, be able to tell me what's become of his daughter?

Sparr. No, I know nothing about her.

Carel. You were a lucky man, Mr. Sparrowhawke.

Sparr. Very fortunate, indeed!

Carel. To be preferred before an only daughter.

Sparr. Yes; but my services to the family —

Carel. They must have been great, no doubt.

Sparr. Greater than you have any idea of.

Carel. Yes, and they will be greater than you have any idea of yourself.

Sparr. What does he mean? Sir, this is very idle talking, I must insist upon knowing what your business is with me.

Carel. My business?

Sparr. Yes, sir, your business?

Carel. My business was to rest myself: and now, having done my business, I rise to take my leave. Mr. Sparrowhawke, your servant. I leave you, at present, in quiet possession of your noble mansion: when next we meet, you will know which of us has the best title to inhabit it. [*Exit.*

Sparr. Which of us the best right? a most extraordinary fellow. Robert.

Enter ROBERT.

Rob. Sir.

Sparr. Does any body know that person?

Rob. None of us, sir.

Sparr. Very well, no matter: if any body should inquire for me, I am gone to Mr. Justice Fidget's,

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, Justice FIDGET'S.

Enter CONSTANT *and* SUSAN.

Sus. Hush, hush, Mr. Constant; for heaven's sake how did you get in?

Cons. No matter; where's Sophia?

Sus. You've put me into such a fluster.

Cons. Hark!

Sus. My master, as I live; and coming this way too: here's a pretty piece of work.

Cons. What can you do with me?

Sus. Do with you? Can you leap out of a two pair of stairs window?

Cons. 'Sdeath!

Sus. Not mad enough for that. (*Aside.*) Here, step into this closet, and keep quiet. (*Goes into the closet.*) I hadn't time to examine his arm, but he looks very wild about the eyes. [*Exit.*

Enter Justice FIDGET *and* SPARROWHAWKE.

Just. F. Mercy on us! the fellow had certainly an evil design.

Sparr. I don't know what to think.

Just. F. I do; he's a house-breaker. We shall all have our throats cut before morning. He'll pay me the next visit; but I'll be prepared for him — I'll certainly be prepared for him.

Sparr. Why, what the devil ails you? An impudent half-witted fellow pays me a strange visit, and you're as much frightened as if the French were landed.

Just. F. French — you are right — I did'nt think of that; he's a spy; he went to take an inventory of your effects: what became of him — which way went he? — when — how — where — why ——

Sparr. Zounds! I've no patience with you. Where's your daughter?

Just. F. I'll send her; I'll go and send her; I'll — don't you think he look'd like a spy?

Sparr. Where's your daughter?

Just. F. I'll go and send her; and do now, when she comes, don't stand shilly shally, make the most of your time — do make the most of your time.

Sparr. Let me alone.

Just. F. You know I shall be in an agitation till the affair is settled. Press her home, now do press her home; they're all alike, they only take a little pressing.

Sparr. I beg your pardon, some of them take a great deal.

Just. F. Well, well, I'll go and send her — I'll go and send her; and do make the most of your time. Mercy on us, I shan't sleep till this fellow's taken.

[*Aside, and Exit.*

Sparr. (*solus.*) My friend Fidget is like the magnetic needle, he never does any thing but tremble. His daughter's a fine girl though: something mysterious about her, too: she has an uncommon aversion to all kinds of exercise. Ask her to ride, riding doesn't agree with her; to dance — she abhors dancing. I begin to suspect she has clumsy legs, for now I recollect, I could never prevail upon her to let me help her over a style: then she wears her petticoats at least six inches longer than the fashion: something wrong, I'm afraid. But she comes.

Enter SOPHIA.

Soph. I wait on you, sir, in obedience to my father's commands.

Sparr. And why not, loveliest of women, in obedience to your own wishes? Your father has, no doubt, informed you of my proposals; and may I hope that, forgetting your former passion ——

Soph. I will be sincere, sir: that I once loved Mr.

Constant 'twould be uncandid to deny; but if you knew how he treated me ——

Sparr. Bad enough, I dare say; he almost broke his father's heart. The old gentleman would have cut him off from the entail of the estate, if he could; but *de mortuis*, you know — we won't disturb the ashes of the dead. And may I then presume ——

Soph. Oh, sir, pardon my confusion, whilst I confess, the gallantry of your air and manner ——

Sparr. Something smart about me, certainly.

(*Aside.*)

Soph. The generosity of your proposals ——

Sparr. A thousand a year jointure, and an handsome equipage.

Soph. Have stolen so imperceptibly upon my heart ——

Sparr. Speak on, thou enchantress! The wax is warm, and now's the time to fix the impression.

(*Aside.*)

Soph. That it owns you for its lawful sovereign.

Sparr. I shall expire with rapture.

Soph. Oh, sir, there begins my misery.

Sparr. The devil it does!

Soph. I shall never be able to reveal it: yet how can I deceive one who has acted so noble a part?

Sparr. What means my angel?

Soph. Nay, sir, call me not angel.

Sparr. Not an angel? Isn't every thing about you heavenly? Your eyes, constellations! Your lips, dropping manna! And your whole shape formed and turned by the Graces and the Loves! I should like to see her legs though. (*Aside.*)

Soph. Oh, no, sir; for — how shall I reveal it — I never can reveal it — I shall die with confusion.

Sparr. And I with suspence.

Soph. Then you must know, sir —— I shall never be able to tell it, if you look me in the face.

Sparr. Well, you'll excuse mé for turning my back upon you. (*Turns his chair round.*)

Soph. Certainly.

Sparr. Now then, if you please.

Soph. You know the pear tree, sir, at the bottom of our garden?

Sparr. Very well.

Soph. There it happened.

Sparr. What happened?

Soph. One day I climb'd it, to get some of the green fruit, but happening to reach too far, I fell down, and broke my right leg.

Sparr. So, so: a surgeon was called in of course?

Soph. Yes, sir, for amputation became necessary.

Sparr. What, was it cut off?

Soph. Yes, sir, and I had another made of cork.

Sparr. 'Sdeath and the devil!

Soph. Thinking you might find it out if we were married ——

Sparr. Most probably.

Soph. I thought it best to reveal it at once. And now, sir, let me entreat you, by the affection you bear me, to conceal your knowledge of this event from my father, whilst I retire to recover from my confusion.

[*Exit.*

Sparr. (*solus.*) A cork leg! So this is the mystery of the long petticoats. Any thing else might have been overlooked, but I never heard of a man's marrying a woman with a cork leg; there's no precedent for it, and I never do any thing without a precedent. Though I am but a limb of the law myself, I must have a wife complete in all her branches. Here comes that old rogue her father; I don't wonder he was in such a hurry for the match. I'll banter him.

Enter the Justice.

Just. F. Well, shall I give you joy — shall I give you joy? Have you struck her?

Sparr. Struck her — yes, and she has struck me too?

Just. F. What, with admiration?

Sparr. With perfect wonder! Do you know, friend Fidget, it may be fancy, perhaps; for we lovers are apt to be whimsical; but your daughter appeared to me higher on one side than the other.

Just. F. What?

Sparr. I thought, when she left me, she waddled away like a lame duck out of the alley.

Just. F. A lame duck! Why, then, you're a goose for thinking so. Nature never form'd a more exact symmetry. She is, as my wife used to say, a perfect model of the Venus — what dy'e call her there.

Sparr. Why, she does in some respects resemble a statue,

Just. F. A statue! Oh, you think the girl hasn't life enough?

Sparr. Just so. What an impudent rascal it is!

Just. F. A little more animation, you think, would become her?

Sparr. I do, upon my soul.

Just. F. Maiden coyness — mere maiden coyness. Marry her, only marry her, and you'll find her flesh and blood all over, I warrant.

Sparr. Indeed! What, sound wind and limb, eh?

Just. F. Perfectly.

Sparr. To be free with you, I doubt it.

Just. F. The devil you do!

Sparr. I think there's here and there a limb that would require a touch of the Promethean torch. But to be serious, for I find you won't take a hint——what mark of stupidity do you see about me, to lead you to suppose I shall be bamboozled into this marriage?

Just. F. Bamboozled! what d'ye mean?

Sparr. Not to marry a woman who climbs pear trees.

Just. F. Pear trees! How — when — where?

Sparr. You really don't understand me?

Just. F. Not a syllable.

Sparr. Why, then, as there's a private reason why I can't marry your daughter, take my advice, and make the best of the matter, by giving her to the cork-cutter.

Just. F. The cork-cutter! Mercy on me, what can he mean?

AIR 8th.

Sparr. I could marry a witch, if, like Midas of old,
The first time I touch'd her, she'd turn into gold;
For tho' she were homely, 'tis odds but she'd be
To Venus as like, as Adonis to me.

II.

Whatever her age, for content there is scope:
If young she gives rapture, if old she gives hope:
And her soft roguish glances, for current shall pass,
Tho' I know one at least of her sparklers is glass.

III.

Tho' the lily ne'er bloom'd on her cheek, and the rose,
Finds its only delight on the tip of her nose;
Yet I'd wed the dear creature, and pocket her pelf,
But a leg made of cork — is the devil itself. [*Exit.*

Just. F. (*solus*) Climbing pear trees! leg made of cork! — mad, certainly mad; mad as a march hare, or a poet in love. [*Exit.*

Enter CONSTANT *from the Closet.*

Cons. Here's a discovery! she never even hinted at this accident in any of her letters to me; but no matter, her treachery is evident, and it is my duty to forget her.

AIR 9th.

'Tis fixt; I disdain
Of my fate to complain,
Tho' the trial I prove is severe;
'Tis better to know,
The full measure of woe,
Than to live on the rack of despair:

Come, pride bring me back my soft hours of rest,
Whilst I blush for the pangs I endure;
Oblivion, erase her false form from my breast,
And scorn and contempt be my cure. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Village.

Enter CARELESS *with his gun, he sings the following.*

AIR 10th.

When smoke upwreaths from humble cots,
And milkmaids fill their pails,
And nature's dewy robe of green,
The breath of morn exhales:
When o'er the mist emerging hill,
The rosy sunbeams play,
And twinkle in the lucid drops,
Which gem the hawthorn spray:

Th' impatient pointers we unbind,
Eager and panting from their den,
O'er stubble-field, and heath and fen,
They sweep the dew and snuff the wind.
See Nero draw upon the game,
With fearful step and slow;
And Sancho, jealous of his fame,
His speed at once command.
To ho! To ho! To ho!
Now fixt as death, they stand:
On whirring wings
The covey springs,
The leaden volley flies,
And one decreed,
By fate to bleed,
Flutters in air, and dies.

Enter GRACE.

Gra. Oh, sir, is it you? I've been looking for you all over the village.

Carel. Indeed — is there any thing I can do for you?

Gra. Yes sir, there is a business, which if I could take so great a liberty with a stranger,

Carel. Nay then, speak boldly; for the greatest liberty you can take with me, is to make me a stranger.

Gra. The favour I wish you to confer on me, is to protect from oppression the good old man your host.

Carel. Who is his oppressor?

Gra. By protecting me, he has incurred the displeasure of the rich and powerful; tho' an industrious man, he is somewhat behind in his rent; and his unfeeling landlord has threatened to put the law in force against him. Here is a picture, 'tis the faithful resemblance of a deceased mother; the diamonds are of some value; take it, and if by disposing of it in any way —

Carel. By heavens, it must not be! dispose of it did you say? I'll be its faithful guardian till the danger is over. Go back to the old gentleman, and tell him that by entertaining a couple of strangers, he has done a good turn for himself. Rather than he shall come to harm, I'll pay the money.

Gra. Oh, sir, this generosity —

Carel. Nay, no thanks.

Gra. Indeed I know not how to thank you; and yet —

AIR 11th.

Nay gentle stranger do not blame
My gratitude sincere,
Accept for thanks what words would shame,
The language of a tear;

The pow'r I want, yet have the will,
Such kindness to repay,
For tho' my tongue may falter still,
My heart will something say. [*Exit.*

Carel. (*solus*) On my soul, she's a charming girl, and there must be something in her history. (*Enter* CONSTANT.) Well, what success?

Cons. Nay, I should ask you that — but I've a story to tell thee, which would burst thy sides with laughter, tho' thou wert a disciple of the crying philosopher.

Carel. And I've a story to tell you, which as it respects the unfortunate, whom all should respect, shall have the preference.

Cons. Well?

Care. I have been talking here to our pretty barmaid.

Cons. Very closely it appeared —

Carel. And have learnt from her, that our host is in danger of having his goods seized to pay his rent. This she told me with difficulty, for her tears flowed faster than her words, and taking from her pocket this picture. (*Gives the picture to* CONSTANT, *who appears agitated.*)

Cons. Well!

Carel. She told me, it was the portrait of her mother.

Cons. Of her mother, did she say?

Carel. Yes, of her mother, and a very comely old woman she is.

Cons. Then it must be so. (*Aside.*)

Carel. She bid me dispose of it to save the old man.

Cons. But you wont?

Carel. D'ye think I'm such a heathen as to part mother and daughter? No, no, I bade her wipe the tears from her cheek, and promised to pay the money myself.

Cons. What's the amount?

Carel. That indeed I forgot to inquire.

Cons. Will you never learn to think?

Carel. Never, I'm afraid—whilst I can feel. Look'e, Constant, I can reason as well as any man. When misfortune does not look me in the face, I can march up slow time to the mouth of a cannon without shrinking; but when I see a tear on the cheek of a woman, it unmans me, and gives such an electrical shock to my reason, that humanity picks my pocket, before justice can fix her scales, or prudence put on her spectacles. I must be gone, you'll find me at our head-quarters.

[*Exit.*

Cons. (*solus*) 'Tis evident this girl is my sister, and

nothing remains, but that I should assert my title, and claim my inheritance, which my long absence has rendered doubly dear; for tho' the enterprizing spirit of youth led me far from my native land, my heart was still at home.

AIR 12th.

From the green waving corn,
The lark spreads his wings.
And hails, as he sings,
The fresh glow of the morn.
With pinions replenish'd, he hovers on high,
And so far sends his song from the blue-vaulted sky,
You would think the shrill note, as he soars from your view,
To his dear native earth, bad for ever, adieu!
But his eye is still fixt, where his wing shall repose;
And tho' heaven-ward his flight,
He upholds with delight,
Yet with rapture he darts to the spot whence he rose.

[*Exit.*

Scene, a Room in the Inn.

Enter STURDY *followed by* SPARROWHAWKE.

Sparr. You refuse to discharge the girl?

Stur. Positively.

Sparr. Then the law must take its course.

Stur. Let it. If I can save myself only by the sacrifice of an innocent girl, the law must take its course; for curs'd be he who, to lighten his own shoulders, would add the weight of a feather to the heavy-laden daughter of affliction.

AIR 13th.

I.

Honour is the poor man's dower,
Peace and sweet content his lot,
Wealth awaits the sons of power,
Him the lowly shelter'd cot.

II.

Yet humbly blest, the son of toil,
From nature's bounty may inherit,
As warm a heart, as high a spirit,
As the proud owner of the soil.

Sparr. Very well, if that's the case I have done, you may walk in, Mr. Claw. *(Enter a bailiff.)* There's your prisoner.

Stur. No violence, I submit.

Enter CARELESS *and* GRACE.

Carel. So, so, you are at it already, gentlemen.

Sparr. This fellow again. (*Aside.*) Yes, we are, pray have you any objection?

Carel. What's the business?

Sparr. This old fellow owes me money, which not being able to pay, I have arrested him.

Carel. What, arrest a man that is not able to pay?

Sparr. I have.

Carel. Why then you have mortgaged your soul to the devil, without reserving the equity of redemption.

Sparr. Indeed! and pray by what authority do you interfere in the business?

Carel. By that authority which nature has implanted here, and which in the case of an oppressed fellow-creature, may sometimes venture to be both judge and jury.

Sparr. Umph! that's a sort of practice I don't understand.

Carel. Can nothing move you?

Sparr. Yes, the old stratagem, payment or dept and costs. — Mr. Claw, do your duty.

Carel. Stand off, myrmidon; I'll pay the money.

Sparr. Why, you see, if you'll pay the money—

Carel. No words, sir. (*Throws down a purse.*) Take it up: what you won't take it up? (SPARROWHAWKE *takes up the purse.*) Pay yourself out of that,

and send me the change immediately; or by all the powers of fustigation, I'll mistake you for a skin of parchment, and drum upon you till I have awakened your conscience.

Sparr. Egad, then you'll drum some time. (*Aside.*) Come along, Claw.

Carel. And be sure you send the change?

Sparr. That I will, by a couple of constables.

[*Exeunt* SPARROWHAWKE *and Bailiff.*

Stur. I thank you, sir. I cannot say how much; but I thank you.

Carel. Why, then, say nothing about it. Come, come, cheer up my old gentleman; cheer up my drooping blossom. We are all in our turns the children of sorrow. Life is but an April day.

AIR 14th. (Trio.)

We pilgrims who travel thro' life's chequer'd day,
Like the blossom of April, but bloom to decay;
A cloud and a sun-beam wind up its short span,
So a smile and a tear make the journey of man.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene, a Room in SPARROWHAWKE'S *House.*

Enter SPARROWHAWKE.

Sparr. I'm ruin'd, I'm undone, I'm annihilated; all my improvements too. Let me read the letter again. (*Reads.*) "My dear Sophia." Sophia! "that must be Fidget's daughter," they had a liking for each other before he went abroad. "I take the first opportunity of announcing to you my arrival in my native village. Contrive to meet me this evening at eight, in the Elm Grove, near the Church-yard. Your's impatiently till then, Edward Constant." That must be he no doubt that paid me a visit this morning, and that I met again just now at old Sturdy's: swearing a robbery against him will be a bold stroke, but the game is desperate. Our being left alone together will give colour to the charge, which if I can once fix upon him, I may make my own terms. I must take care that this letter reaches Fidget's daughter in time for her to attend the interview. Oh, fortune! fortune! help me at this lift, and I'll pull down my Chinese pagoda, and build thee a temple

on the spot. (*Enter* O'BLARNEY *with pen, ink, and paper.*)

O'Blar. Here are the implements.

Sparr. Well, well! sit down, and take his description.

O'Blar. That I will, grammatically; it shall agree with him, in case, gender, and number.

Sparr. Write: a dark well-looking man.

O'Blar. You mean to say, a handsome brunette.

Sparr. Psha! write as I tell you.

O'Blar. A dark well-looking man. (*Writes.*)

Sparr. With a hazle eye.

O'Blar. What colour was the other?

Sprrr. Psha! write as I tell you. Have you got his eyes?

O'Blar. Both of them: what age shall I put upon him?

Sparr. Let me see — about seventeen when he went abroad, seventeen and five (*Aside.*)—say about two and twenty.

O'Blar. About two and twenty.

Sparr. Had on a blue coat.

O'Blar. Second cloth or superfine?

Sparr. No matter, no matter.

O'Blar. No matter, whether second cloth or superfine.

Sparr. White waistcoat, leather breeches and boots.

O'Blar. There; now I think we have him complete.

Sparr. A reward of one hundred pounds?

O'Blar. One hundred pounds? It's impossible he can escape.

Sparr. Print a hundred, and disperse them all over the country.

O'Blar. It shall circulate like my grammar; I'll give one to every body I meet.

Sparr. Raise the whole village in a posse comitatus, and bring him dead or alive (for if he makes any resistance, you'll be justified in shooting him) to Mr. Justice Fidget's. [*Exit.*

O'Blar. (*solus*) Let me alone, I'm an old bird catcher: do you think I don't know how to put salt upon his tail. Raise the whole village in a posse comitatus! not a bit of it — you shall find, when there's a hundred pounds in the wind, I'm a posse comitatus myself.

AIR 15th.

A neat hundred pounds, what shall I do with it?
Marry a wife, and she'll soon help me thro' with it.
I'll keep a fat pig,
And a dog and a cat,
Mount a new wig,
And, I think, a new hat!

Buy a snug piece of ground,
Just the size of the pound,
Where potatoes shall multiply all the year round:
And since Dr. O'Blarney's genteeler, you see,
Than plain Mr. O'Blarney, I'll take a degree,
Perhaps two or three;
For the name of a man, must for letters prevail,
When he wears half the alphabet pinn'd to his tail.
I'll import my own snuff, for snuff-taking, I'm told,
Is exceeding polite, tho' 'tis blackguard — but hold!
An't I counting my chickens a little too soon?
For e'er they are hatch'd,
This same rogue must be catch'd,
So whilst at his heels,
I dance Irish reels,
May the devil take the hindmost, this fine afternoon.
[*Exit.*

Scene, in the Village.

Enter CONSTANT *and* CARELESS.

Cons. And you really are in love with the girl?

Carel. Is she not a charming creature?

Cons. She is a pretty woman in distress; and that, to a man who can relieve it, is of all human objects

the most interesting — but consider the meanness of her birth.

Carel. Her conduct belies it — besides, the picture. However, I'm determined to inquire.

Cons. You may save yourself the trouble.

Carel. How?

Cons. I have ascertained the point myself.

Carel. You?

Cons. Nay, don't be jealous.

Carel. Well.

Cons. Her family is respectable.

Carel. Respectable?

Cons. Ay, respectable; it would'nt become me to say more — she has friends who must be consulted.

Carel. Friends?

Cons. I mean relations.

Carel. Ay, that's quite another thing — you may find twenty that are allied to her by blood, to one that is akin to her misfortunes.

Cons. Fortune she has none.

Carel. So much the better.

Cons. So much the better! come, come, you shall never marry her without one.

Carel. Shan't marry her?

Cons. Positively shan't, for I have too great a regard for my sister's happiness.

Carel. Your sister?

Cons. 'Tis even so.

Carel. Are you in earnest?

Cons. 'Tis she, by heaven!

Carel. Why, then, your sister is a charming girl, and what think you of me for a brother-in-law?

Const. If my sister thinks but half as well of you, I shall be most proud of the relationship.

Carel. And if she does not think well of me, the relationship may go to the devil; for my fortune shall never purchase the hand, which my own merits are not able to obtain.

AIR 16th.

I.

Curs'd be the wretch whose wealth succeeds
To buy the heart he cannot move,
And to the altar rais'd for love,
His trembling captive leads.

II.

Long may her cold reluctant charms,
Possess'd, but not enjoy'd,
With lifeless beauty fill his arms,
And leave his heart a void. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Elm Grove.

Enter SOPHIA.

AIR 17th.

Sweet minstrel of the midnight hour,
Who, from thy solitary bower,
Pourest thy plaintive trill,
When all the woods are still,
Oh, let my virgin sorrows float,
Responsive to thy widow'd note,
For nought but love forlorn can be
The burthen of thy melody,
Breathing so musically forth thy woes,
Night borrows silence from each dying close.

Soph. This second letter of Constant's puzzles me still more than his former one. Indeed he appears to have forgotten that he had written the first. It shews, however, that his reason is less disturbed.

Enter CONSTANT.

Constant!

Cons. Sophia! (*He endeavours to rush into her arms, but stops short.*) 'Sdeath! I cannot — 'tis impossible.

Soph. Is it thus we are to meet? Do you not know me, Constant?

Cons. Oh, yes, I know you well; you are the woman whose misfortune would have grieved, had not her falsehood undone me.

Soph. Misfortune! Falsehood! he has relapsed again. Come, come, you are not well: lean on my arm, and recollect yourself.

Cons. Recollect myself? Was I not an eye witness to the whole? Did I not just now overhear you confess to that scoundrel attorney that you had resigned me for ever.

Soph. So, so, so!

Cons. To your utter confusion, I was concealed in the closet, and privy to it all.

Soph. Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!

Cons. 'Sdeath! to be laugh'd at, too!

Soph. Laugh'd at! Why, could you really suppose I should invent such a fable, but to avoid his odious addresses: though, had the story been true, your misfortune would have been as great as mine.

Cons. My misfortune?

Soph. Come, come, the fellow you sent with the letter blabb'd the secret.

Cons. Did he?

Soph. Yes, he told me the whole affair.

Cons. And what did he tell you?

Soph. Nay, nay — the masqued battery.

Cons. The masqued battery?

Soph. Why hav'nt you ——

Cons. What?

Soph. Lost your right arm?

Cons. My right arm!

Soph. Then I have been imposed on too. The fellow you sent with the letter told me you had lost your right arm from the opening of a masqued battery.

Cons. Did he? The first time I catch him, I'll convince him to the contrary. Thus our perplexities vanish; and thus I open both my arms to press you once more to this faithful bosom.

Soph. And thus, with both my legs, I fly to meet you. (*They embrace.*) Yet our interview must be short: your friend the lawyer has been robb'd: the whole village is abroad: I shall be presently missed, and ——

Cons. True; our being found together might lead to discoveries which, at present, must not be made.

Soph. And yet, after so long an absence ——

Cons. My dear girl, we must submit to necessity. We part but till to-morrow, when I shall openly avow myself, and claim you at your father's hands.

AIR 18th. (Duet.)

I.

As men who long at sea have been,
Kindle at nature's robes of green;
As joys the pilgrim's thirsting soul,
To hear the living waters roll;
As mother's clasp their infants dear,
And eye them thro' a joyful tear;
So lovers meet,
With rapture greet.

II.

As maids with midnight vigils pale,
Shut up some sweet love-woven tale;
As anglers, at day's parting gleam,
Still linger o'er the darkling stream;
As exiles bid the land farewell,
Where all their warmest wishes dwell;
So lovers part,
With breaking heart.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, near Justice FIDGET'S.

Enter TODDY.

Tod. Ecod! this old port gets into a man's head pre-

sently, and gives such a charming confusion to the — such a delightful and pleasant satisfaction to the — psha! what the devil's the matter with me?

Enter CONSTANT.

Cons. So, I have found you at last, scoundrel.

Tod. Found me, scoundrel! Sir, you have the advantage of me.

Cons. Don't you know me, villain?

Tod. Know you, villain! Sir, I despise insinuations; stand off; familiarity corrupts contempt — and evil communications breed good manners.

Cons. Why, you impudent drunken rascal! do you know me now, (*beats him*) sirrah?

Tod. Oh, yes; mercy! yes, sir; I think I can feel the knowledge of you.

Cons. As you hope to keep a whole bone in your skin, tell me what you did with the letter.

Tod. The letter, sir? What letter?

Cons. No prevarication, villain: what did you with the letter?

Tod. Lost it, sir.

Cons. Where, sir?

Tod. That's the very thing I wanted to find out.

Cons. No jesting, sir; answer me immediately.

Tod. You must know, then, sir, I took the letter, and put it into my pocket, and walking steadily and soberly on, as I do now, sir, I came to the Blackamoor's Head ——

Cons. Well, sir?

Tod. There, as the devil would have it, I met with a friend — I shouldn't have met with him if the wind hadn't been south-west — so feeling presently for the letter, as I wanted a lady for a toast ——

Cons. Impudent rascal!

Tod. I found it was gone, sir.

Cons. Well, sir?

Tod. But my friend being an excellent grammarian, and a sort of a poet, I got him to write another.

Cons. And he did it?

Tod. Touch'd it off presently: Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! I beg pardon, sir; but — Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! I told him, that simile of the ass would never do.

Cons. And this is the whole truth?

Tod. As I hope for mercy, sir.

Cons. Well, sir, get you gone, and wait for me at the inn: and if ever I catch you at these tricks again, I'll cure you, for the rest of your life, of getting drunk.

[*Exit.*

Tod. (*solus.*) Cure me of getting drunk? I defy you. I defy the whole college of physicians. I defy apothecaries' hall: for though I'm cur'd every morning, I'm sure to have a relapse before night. If drunkenness be a virtue, thank heaven, I'm incorrigible. My friends have sometimes endeavoured to debauch me into sobriety, but it wouldn't do.

Enter the Justice behind, and followers.

Just. F. He's drunk. Stand back, and leave me alone with him. (*Servants retire.*) Your servant, sir.

Tod. Sir, I am your servant. Do you see that great house, yonder?

Just. F. Mercy on us! my house. Well, sir?

Tod. Perhaps you're acquainted there?

Just. F. Oh, yes, I dine there most days in the week.

Tod. Then, perhaps, you know Robin, the butler? If not, let me introduce you to the cellar.

Just. F. I thank you; but I generally contrive to introduce myself into the parlour.

Tod. Then you are an ignoramus, for the best wine never goes there.

Just. F. Indeed. (*Aside.*) Why you seem to be tolerably intimate in the family?

Tod. Hand and glove, from the garret to the cellar: I romp with the maids, and tipple with the butler.

Just. F. Then you don't know the master?

Tod. I wouldn't be seen in his company: he hasn't the soul of a tom-tit, nor the spirit of a dried herring; he's duller than a water drinker, and worse company than an empty bottle. No, no, Robin's the lad: I shall never forget him. Now, says he, I'll give you some of my master's very old port; none but his particular friends ever drink it; therefore, says he, if you and I drink it, we shall be his particular friends. Pretty good logic! Your opinion, sir?

Just. F. Excellent. The fellow has put me into a cold sweat. (*Aside.*)

Tod. Out it came—for you know there may be two keys to one lock: out it came; but we were both so comical, we could neither of us draw the cork. Now you know there are two ways of getting wine out of a bottle—imprimis, drawing the cork; that, I presume, is your way.

Just. F. You are right, sir.

Tod. Secundo—knocking off the neck of the bottle.

Just. F. That, I presume, was your way.

Tod. You are right, sir.

Just. F. However, at present, I'd recommend you to take care of your own neck. Here, Walter! John! and the rest of you, seize this fellow, and bring him along.

AIR 19th. (Duet.)

Just. F. Take him away!
Tod. Your reason, I pray?
Just. F. To be brief, you're a thief,
And you'll certainly hang,
Unless you impeach
The rest of the gang.
Tod. We are but two, as I told you but now,
And each an honest fellow;
For Robin, he's as drunk as a sow,
And I'm a little mellow;
Therefore let me be liberated.
I'm not drunk, as you see,
Tho' perhaps I may be
A little elevated.
Just. F. No, you must not be liberated.
Tho' when brought before me,
In due time you shall be
A little elevated. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Inn.

Enter STURDY *and* GRACE.

Stur. Nay, nay, girl; he must be the man.

Grace. How is it possible that a gentleman capable of so generous an action should be guilty of one so atrocious.

Stur. Why that does puzzle me — and yet there has been a mystery about both of them ever since they arrived; they have cautiously concealed their names. If I have broken rather unawares upon them, they have immediately put an end to their conversation: and yet, that he should have the audacity to rob a man — a lawyer, too — in his own house — in the broad day — it puzzles me strangely. Here he comes; I'll put it roundly to him.

Enter CARELESS.

Carel. So, you have had a robbery in the village?

Stur. What, you have heard of it, then?

Carel. One can hear of nothing else.

Stur. Have you seen the advertisement?

Carel. I pass'd one just now, but hadn't the curiosity to read it.

Stur. It might have been worth your notice.

Carel. Is there then any thing particular in it?

Stur. Very particular. I must come to the point. (*Aside.*) Young man, you are my friend, you saved me from a jail, and may this right arm rot from me, if ever it stirs a finger to help you into one.

Carel. What d'ye mean?

Stur. You are discovered.

Carel. That's unlucky, I meant to have kept myself unknown till to-morrow at least.

Stur. So, so. (*Aside to* GRACE.) They are now in full pursuit after you.

Carel. In pursuit after me?

Stur. Ay, the blood-hounds of the law; and here comes the first of the pack. (*Enter* O'BLARNEY.)

Gra. Then 'tis all over with him.

Carel. What the devil can all this mean?

O'Blar. What it means? it means no ill to those who mean well.

Carel. Speak, sir, to be understood: I don't apprehend you.

O'Blar. Apprehend me! there's no occasion for it: 'tis I that am to apprehend you.

Carel. Apprehend me?

O'Blar. Or some body very much like you; but as a man upon these occasions is apt to forget his own person. (*Takes out one of the hand-bills.*) Here

you may see yourself as plain as a modern beau in his boot tops, when he has clean'd them himself.

Carel. (*Reading.*) Blue coat, white waistcoat, leather breeches, and boots.

O'Blar. Do you happen to recollect such a gentleman?

Stur. 'Tis not the surprise of guilt.

Gra. No, he is innocent.

Carel. This is very extraordinary.

O'Blar. Extraordinary! What, that a gentleman should be like himself?

Carel. You, sir, I presume, are an officer of justice?

O'Blar. A posse comitatus at your service.

Carel. I perceive a trifling mistake has arisen, which, to clear up, I suppose it will be necessary I should accompany you.

O'Blar. Clear up! why you don't mean to deny it?

Carel. Would you have me confess a crime of which I am innocent?

O'Blar. By all means: won't it be more like an honest gentleman, to rob an attorney of some dirty pounds, shillings, and pence; than to defraud me of an hundred pounds, which I am to have for apprehending you.

Carel. Why, that indeed I didn't consider.

O'Blar. I thought you couldn't have look'd upon it with both your eyes.

Stur. Perhaps it will be satisfactory that we all attend?

O'Blar. Certainly, you are all exculpated.

Carel. Very well, sir, we follow you.

O'Blar. And see you do it prettily, as the nominative case follows the verb.

Carel. The accusative, I believe.

O'Blar. Not in my grammar; that's one of the things I have set right.

Carel. Proceed, sir, you are our gentleman usher.

O'Blarn. As much of the gentleman as you please, but as for usher—I've been a little above that for some time.

Justice FIDGET's — *Scene the last.*

Enter Justice FIDGET *and* SPARROWHAWKE.

Just. F. Well, but why didn't you tell me this morning that the fellow had robb'd you?

Sparr. I saw you were in such an agitation, that —

Just. F. True, it might have been dangerous: well, I have caught two of them; one is a drunken servant, who has been doing his best to prevent my cellar from being over-stocked; the other calls himself a gentleman.

Sparr. Ay, so does every fellow now that doesn't come within the vagrant act. Here they are; now the powers of audacity assist me!

Enter O'BLARNEY, *with* CARELESS, STURDY, *and* GRACE. *The Justice's Servants with* CONSTANT. SOPHIA *also appears.*

Just. F. Keep them at a distance, be sure you keep them at a distance. Now, brother Sparrowhawke, do you see your man.

Sparr. That's he. (*Pointing to* CARELESS.)

Just. F. Bring him forward — Take care you hold him fast tho'.

O'Blar. That I will, for I hold an hundred pounds.

Just. F. Pray, friend, what is your name?

Carel. That, for the present, must be a secret.

O'Blar. Perhaps not — this bit of a letter found in his pocket —

Sparr. Give it me —

O'Blar. Not a bit of it, it's my business to read the evidence.

Just. F. Well, well, read, read, read.

O'Blar. (*Reads.*) "My dear uncle" (uncle? that's his favourite pawnbroker) "I take the earliest opportunity of acquainting you, that I have once more

landed on my native shore" (returned from transportation, no doubt.)

Sparr. Proceed, sir,

O'Blar. "I shall snatch the first opportunity of taking you by the hand, and am, as ever, your affectionate nephew, Christopher Careless."

Sparr. Confusion!

Just. F. Hey, how, Careless? Zounds, sir, will you explain this?

Carel. I am the person whose name is subscribed to that letter, and your graceless nephew.

Just. F. Graceless? why zounds, have you, for want of other amusement, been committing a robbery?

Carel. Hold sir — perhaps your friend there, upon recollection ——

Sparr. Why now I look again, I profess I have my doubts; tho' he certainly answers in some particulars, my conscience won't suffer me to swear positively to him.

O'Blar. No?

Carel. Then mine will — I am the man!

O'Blar. To be sure you are.

Carel. You were perfectly right as to my person, but I believe made a small mistake in my name: this is the gentleman you mistook me for.

Just. F. And who the devil's that?

Carel. Son and heir to your friend, the late Mr. Constant.

Just. F. Why he never had but one son, and he —

Carel. Died in India, so it was reported — which report he has ever since kept alive, the better to watch and frustrate the artifices of a scoundrel.

Just. F. But what proof have you?

Carel. There stands one evidence of the fact (*pointing to* SPARROWHAWKE) who would convince any twelve men in Europe.

Soph. Should there want a second — I can prove the having carried on a correspondence with Captain Constant for these five years.

Just. F. Can you? I wish I had found it out.

Carel. This added to my knowledge of the fact, and his servant's evidence —

Sparr. Proof enough, I confess.—Captain Constant, as it has never been my practice to persevere in a bad cause, I am ready to confess you are alive; and as I require nothing more than justice, as all I want is common honesty, (*They all laugh.*) I am ready to come to a fair account with you whenever you please.

Cons. I shall take an early opportunity, sir.

Sparr. You will find me ready. There may yet be some means to prevent him. (*Going.*)

O'Blar. Sir. (*To* SPARROWHAWKE.)

Sparr. Well.

O'Blar. As it has lately been the annual custom, I would just wish to know whether you would have the bells set a ringing this evening.

Sparr. You may hang yourself in the ropes. [*Exit.*

Just. F. So there has been no robbery after all?

O'Blar. No robbery! but still there ought to be a reward.

Carel. A mere invention, sir.

Just. F. Captain Constant, give me your hand; you have been some time in India—I don't mean to ask any impertinent questions, but young men don't go to India for nothing.

O'Blar. Faith, nor young women neither.

Just. F. If you still hold your mind to my daughter, my blessing, and a snug sum sha'nt be wanting.

Cons. Here, then, I embark my sum of future happiness. (*Takes* SOPHIA'S *hand.*) One thing still remains to be done, to reward the services of our honest host.

Stur. Nay, sir, I look for no reward.

O'Blar. Faith, but I do.

Cons. Therefore the more deserve it; and that you may never henceforth incur the oppression of an unfeeling landlord, the farm you occupy is your own.

Stur. This generosity?

Cons. No thanks; I will have it so.

Just. F. Why this is well, this is as it should be; after turning away Robin the butler, I shall be perfectly easy again. O, my conscience! I think the perplexities of the evening would make a tolerable play, but that we must submit to the judgment of our friends.

FINALE.

Hence with wrinkled care and sorrow,
Gloomy thoughts may cloud to-morrow;
Here to-night, with festive glee,
Mirth shall keep her jubilee.
See to bless this happy meeting,
Kindred love with friendship vies,
Hearts with honest rapture beating,
Glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes.

THE FISHERMAN,

AN OPERA.

IN THREE ACTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE opera of *The Fisherman* possesses better claims to originality than the majority of Mr. Tobin's dramatic pieces. The groundwork of the serious part is borrowed from the commencement of an episode in the Diable Boiteux. For the comic scenes, the author appears to have been indebted solely to his own invention. In the group of Martha, Stephano, and Balthazar, he has merely developed a situa-

tion previously suggested in his unpublished opera of *The Gypsies.* The speech of Stephano in the scene with Rosano has evidently furnished the outline of Jaques in *The Honey-moon.*

It is unnecessary to repeat what has been already observed of the predilection generally entertained for this opera by the author's *literary* friends—and in Mr. James Tobin's letter to Mr. Whitbread, it is distinctly stated to have been accepted before the fire which destroyed Drury Lane Theatre—yet in 1819, when, under the friendly auspices of Mr. Elliston, it was at length (by the title of *The Fisherman's Hut*) announced for representation, some suspicions arose whether it was entitled to be classed with Mr. Tobin's

genuine productions *. The effects of this prejudice were visible during the representation, when a sceptical and sometimes a captious spirit prevailed over that candour and liberality which are in general the characteristic of a British audience. It may have been unfortunate for *The Fisherman's Hut* that it was permitted to occupy the place of a full play: it possessed, indeed, some rare merits of dialogue and situation; but the fable appears to have been of too slight a texture to satisfy the present taste. As a second

* With respect to the genuineness of this production, it remains to state, that in common with the other dramas, which, during the author's lifetime were offered for acceptance, *The Fisherman* was read to his intimate friends — of whom it will be sufficient to mention the gentleman who has sketched the poet's character in these Memoirs, and the author of the prologue to *The Honey-moon.*

piece, it is impossible not to believe that it must have obtained universal applause; —as a first, it perhaps solicited indulgence, never more gracefully bestowed than in cherishing the posthumous reputation of a writer so deservedly admired as the author of *The Honey-moon.*

Under the influence of doubt and misconception, *The Fisherman's Hut,* though supported by admirable acting, had obviously little chance of obtaining that popularity, which might have been expected from one of Mr. Tobin's productions. With this painful impression it was on the third night withdrawn by Mr. Elliston, not without the advice and concurrence of the author's friends, in whom the delicacy and liberality of his conduct could

not but produce deep and permanent feelings of gratitude and obligation.

To the candid and unprejudiced Public, *The Fisherman* is now submitted, with the hope that on perusal it will be found to justify the manager's taste, and at some more favourable moment become, in a compressed form, a permanent acquisition to that Theatre, in which a generous effort has been made to protect it from oblivion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

STEPHANO -	Mr. Munden.
BALTHAZAR -	Mr. Dowton.
DURAZZO - -	Mr. Penley.
ROSANO - -	Mr. Hamblin.
NICOLINO - -	Mr. Harley.
COUNTESS MODENA	Mrs. West.
LEAH - -	Miss Carew.
MARTHA - -	Miss Kelly.

Sailors, Attendants.

Scene, Sicily.

THE FISHERMAN.

ACT I.

Scene 1st.—Three Fishermen going to their work.

AIR 1st. (Trio.)

1st Fish. How fares it, fellow fisherman,
This cold and frosty morn?

2d Fish. I wish I were in bed again,
Till the morning star has bid farewell,
And the sun has thaw'd the icicle,
That shivers on the thorn.

3d Fish. Yet whether the sun will shine or no,
Whether it rain, or hail, or blow,
We must rise when the cock doth crow,
And the huntsman sounds his horn.
Yet merrily we pull,
When the net is full,
Whether the sun will shine or no,
Whether it rain, or hail, or blow. [*Exeunt.*

Scene 2d.—A Wood.

Enter DURAZZO *and* ROSANO.

Ros. Shall we go deeper into the heart of the wood,
Or do our business here?
Dur. Here, if you like the spot.—
To me 'tis admirable.
Ros. To the point—You still
Refuse to yield pretensions to the lady?
Dur. Most peremptorily!
Ros. Discourse is vain then?
Dur. Idle in the extreme—
I did not come to talk.
Ros. Nor I.
Dur. My motto is, *a word, a blow.*
We've had the *word* already.——
Ros. Now for the blow then. (*Draws. They fight, and the* COUNTESS *enters, and runs between.*)
Coun. Forbear, I charge you!
Dur. Stand aside, lady, and don't spoil diversion.
You'll see fair play, I warrant.

Ros. Pray retire.
As scanty water feeds devouring flames—
Your presence will but heat us more.
Coun. As ye are men, forbear! have ye no pity?
Dur. Thanks to your kind example, lady, none.
Ros. Pity?—Come on, sir, it but wounds her pride,
That we should die of ought but broken hearts.
Coun. Oh heavens! can nothing move you?
Dur. One thing—
Coun. Name it!
Ros. That on this spot you now at once declare
Which of us is more worthy of your love.
Dur. That is not all, fair lady; you must swear,
E'er sunset to become the bride of him
For whom your heart pronounces.
Coun. Never!
Ros. Then by all things most sacred, this spot shall be
The grave of one or both of us.
Dur. I say amen to that.
Ros. Determine, lady.
Dur. Come, she refuses—
Coun. Oh stop, for mercy!
Dur. She trifles still; come on, sir!
Coun. Yet for a moment hear me, ye hard men!
If, to prevent the flow of human blood,

I teach my lips th' involuntary tale;
Nay more, if I consent to be a bride,
Lest one or both of you become a corse;
If I do this, you in your turn must swear,
No ling'ring grudge shall in his bosom live,
Whom from a cruel bondage I set free,
Against his chosen rival.

Ros. This, by my sword,
Which nothing else can sheath, I swear!

Coun. And you, sir?

Dur. I swear. (*They sheath their swords.*)

Coun. Let me intreat you yet forego your purpose.
(*They half draw their swords.*)
Well—if I must.—Oh what a task is mine,
When that which pleases most, will most offend,
And, like a double-breathing wind, I bring
Mildew and health at once!

Dur. To the point, lady!

Ros. We're on the rack!

Coun. Both valiant men you are,
And honourable woers—both of minds
So richly gifted with rare qualities,
That, were my eye now searching for a friend,
I would tell both how equally I priz'd you,
Weighing your worth in the strict scales of justice;
But love is most fantastical, and tries

By an uneven balance of its own,
The qualities of men—a word, a look,
Will turn the trembling beam. Then let my choice
Speak woman's folly, and not your deserts.
I do esteem you both, yea, both as men
Deep in my heart I honour.—But my love,
Since you will wring the foolish secret from me,
It is Rosano's. (*Gives him her hand.*) Noble gentleman! (*To* DURAZZO.)
Rejoice that you have lost a worthless prize,
And so escaped repentance.—Come, Rosano.

Ros. Your hand, sir! in this firm and faithful grasp
Of friendship, be our enmities forgot—

Dur. Buried for ever, sir!

Ros. And when you woo
Another lady, may your wishes prosper
As mine do now.

Dur. I thank ye, sir, I thank you!

Coun. May you find
Her heart untenanted, and her fair self
As bountiful to your aspiring hopes,
As I have been ungracious.—Come, Rosano!

[*Exeunt* COUNTESS *and* ROSANO.

DURAZZO, *solus*.

A hopeful end to a long three years wooing,
Now to be turn'd adrift, and for a man
Whose love was but of yesterday.—No matter,
He is a thriving wooer, and has learnt
The briefest mode of tickling ladies fancies.
How her full eye gaz'd on him!
With what a smother'd gust she press'd his hand!
Which as she strove to hide, the crimson blood
Rush'd to her cheek, and her wild bosom heav'd —
Not all the language that e'er fell from lips
Could make confession half so eloquent. —
I see them still, he presses her white hand,
Steals like a curling tendril round her waist,
Hangs o'er her panting bosom, meets her lip,
He leads her to the altar, the cursed priest
Has join'd their hands for ever.
And now—Damnation! that shall never be:
No, never, never, never!—I have sworn
Against my friend to feed no private grudge,
Yet kindness to the lady I may bear,
Nor spot my soul with perjury—To-night,
Wedded to-night? My ship lies in the harbour,
And in the fluttering sails the wind sings fair—
Look to thy prize, Rosano! She has struck

To thee, but e'er thou bring'st her to the port,
Tempests may rise, and roaring seas o'erwhelm thee.
[*Exit.*

Scene 4th.—BALTHAZAR'S *House.*

BALTHAZAR *and* LEAH *his Daughter.*

Bal. Poh, poh! I tell you, you're a silly girl, you must think no more of him.

Leah. But I cannot help thinking of him, sir.

Bal. Marry a Christian? You must not dream of such a thing! a beggarly fisherman!

Leah. But I can't dream of any thing else.

Bal. Yesh, but dreams you know go by contraries.

Leah. Well, I'm glad of that, for I dreamt last night that you would never give your consent.

Bal. Then you dreamt true, for I will never give my consent. Don't you know he's a Christian.

Leah. What then, sir? Love is of all religions.

AIR 2d.*

I.

I care not if Christian or Jew,
He has faith in the vow which I swore,
And whilst love in his bosom beats true,
I'll believe in the man I adore.

* This song was omitted in the representation.

II.

What religion a zeal can impart
Like the simple commandment of love,
His worship is fix'd in the heart,
And who can an infidel prove.

III.

Let each sect still imagine a heav'n
Above, which they only shall know;
True love is a paradise giv'n
To all who will seek it below.

Bal. Why dat ish all very true; but then he is poor, miserably poor.

Leah. But very industrious, sir?

Bal. And thoughtless and giddy.

Leah. But then he's so young!

Bal. Yesh—he's too young for a husband.

Leah. Is he, sir! but perhaps old enough for a wife.

Bal. No, no, he's a great deal too young.

Leah. Then I'll wait till he's older.

Bal. Poh! poh! you're a very silly girl, you will almost put me in a passion presently. I tell you, you must not think of him. There are many of our own tribe that cast upon you the look of love. What damsel that is worth a jew's eye would throw herself away upon a christian. I am going to take a

walk upon the beach, to see if the tide has thrown up any thing, and shall be back presently. Marry a beggarly fisherman, and a christian too? I will never give my consent. If I could pardon his religion, I never could forgive his poverty: So remember, I will never give my consent! I will never give my consent! [*Exit.*

LEAH *sola.*

Why then (when he's old enough) I am afraid I shall marry him without. Not love him because he is a Christian. I must have a better reason than that. When he looks tenderly at me I cannot read christian in his eyes; and if he presses my hand, no jew could do it with more softness; and when he steals a kiss, for he will sometimes be a little impudent, I am sure no one would know him to be a heathen by the touch of his lips.

AIR 3d.

I.

Sweet are the stolen hours of love,
When none our transports can reprove,
When faithful hearts together beat,
And lips with trembling rapture greet,
Oh! then love's stolen hours are sweet.

II.

Yet midst the dear delight we sigh,
For oh! how quick the moments fly;
Each other lingering turn to view,
And 'ere we part oft bid adieu.
For sweet, &c. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Sea Shore.

DURAZZO *and two Seamen of his Crew.*

Dur. You are resolved?

1*st Sailor.* An hundred ducats each, you say?

2*d Sailor.* And the ornaments about her person?

Dur. All, all; she has rings enough on her fingers to furnish a jeweller's shop.

1*st Sailor.* Well, well, we agree, we agree, noble captain; but how shall we secure her? That young Rosano fights like a devil.

2*d Sailor.* Why then we'll fight like a couple of devils.

Dur. There will be no occasion: he parted from her at the corner of the wood: I saw him mount his horse and ride away.

1*st Sailor.* Then the bird's ours. But where shall we find her a cage?

2*d Sailor.* I have it. You know the cave in the rock where we sometimes stow an odd article or two.

Dur. Excellent! You shall keep her there, till I can lay my vessel alongside; and when I fire a signal gun, bring her on board immediately.

1*st Sailor.* The thing's done.

Dur. Be resolute my lads, and remember the reward.

2*d Sailor.* All the trinkets?

Dur. All, all!

2*d Sailor.* Rings and necklace?

Dur. Every thing.

1*st Sailor.* Along, comrade.

Dur. Yet hold—should you have an opportunity, you may spread a report that you saw her carried to the castle—away!

2*d Sailor.* We'll give a good account of her.

[*Exeunt Sailors.*

DURAZZO *solus.*

Now, scornful beauty,
'Twill be my turn to triumph—shame on manhood;
I've been a whining captive at her feet,
I blush to think how long; but still her lip
Has swell'd with scorn, her eye has been averted.
Once more I'll try to soften her to love:
If she relent, 'tis well! if not, there is
But one way left.

AIR 4th.

I.

For me her unrelenting heart
Ne'er felt love's sympathetic glow,
Nor ever did a hope impart
Her coral lip or rising snow;
For me there lurk'd no kind reply
Within the circle of her eye.

II.

No more a captive at her feet
I'll waste in sighs the precious hour,
But since my flame thou wilt not greet,
Proud beauty, thou shalt feel my power;
Amid thy rifled charms I'll prove
The full revenge of slighted love.

Scene, the Sea Shore.

The two Sailors enter with the COUNTESS.

1*st Sailor.* No struggling, lady! 'tis vain.

Coun. Do you mean to murder me?

2*d. Sailor.* If you make the least noise.

Coun. What have I done, or how offended you?

1*st Sailor.* Peace, I say. No one shall hurt you. The handkerchief, Soto. (*To his messmate.*)

2*d Sailor.* You have got it.

1*st Sailor.* No, no, you have it.

2*d Sailor.* Here!

Coun. What horrible plot is this?

1*st Sailor.* No more, lady, or we shall make you dumb for ever. (*They bind her eyes.*)

Coun. Whither are you carrying me?

2*d Sailor.* You'll know that soon enough!

Coun. 'Tis towards the sea.

1*st Sailor.* Peace, I say!

Coun. Heav'n protect me!

2*d Sailor.* You shall have a protector soon. (*They put her into a boat.*) Push away, comrade; I'll look after the lady. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, Nicolino's Cottage.

MARTHA, *and* BALTHAZAR *following her.*

Bal. Why will you not listen to me, Mrs. Martha?

Mar. Fye for shame! To have the conscience to talk love to me, and yet forbid your daughter to marry my brother, because, forsooth, he's a christian.

Bal. Yesh—but I do not offer to marry you. It is matrimony makes the sin. There is no harm in a jew loving a christian, but to marry her, oh! that ish the abomination.

AIR 5th.

I.

When a jew meets a fair christian creature,
Young and plump with a delicate skin,
To love is the first law of nature,
But to marry—oh! that is the sin.
For once in my life
I was blest with a wife,
And so dearly we loved, so like sister and brother,
I swore when she died I would ne'er have another.

II.

But grieving I've heard is a folly
While there's ought to give joy left behind,
So no longer I'll be melancholy,
She is easy—and I am resign'd.
What joy did I feel,
When the bells rang a peal,
At our wedding, and when for her death they were tolling,
I thought in the sound there was something consoling.

Well, what do you say to my song, don't you think there is argument and reason in it? (NICOLINO *singing without.*) Hey, why is'nt that Nicolino? What the devil brings him home so early? Remember this

visit was to him in the way of business. You understand me.

NICOLINO *enters.*

Nic. Hah! Master Balthazar, you here? The very man I wanted to light upon.

Bal. That ish fortunate, for I was on the look out for you.

Nic. Indeed! What this visit was intended for me?

Bal. Oh yesh! It was intended for you.

Nic. What you call'd when you did'nt expect to find me at home? Well, that's fashionable however! You were'nt, I see, content to leave your card.

Bal. Oh, no! I had too much politeness for that.

Nic. Here, girl, go and hang them to dry, and get my dinner; I've a little business with my friend Balthazar and must be private. [*Exit* MARTHA.

Bal. Business with me, and what ish dat? Have you picked up any old china, or rings, or trinkets?

Nic. Why yes, I have picked up a bit of a trinket. What think you of that, master Jew? (*Shewing a Diamond Necklace.*) What think you of that? I thought it would make your eye sparkle.

Bal. Bless me! let me see it. Diamonds as I live. (*Aside.*) How did you get this?

Nic. How? Why, caught it in my net.

Bal. Pho! pho! caught the moon in your net.

Nic. Why, so I have, very often for that matter, but I never could bring it ashore. I tell you I caught it in my net! D'ye think I lie? Real diamonds, master Balthazar.

Bal. Real diamonds, Ha, ha, ha!—of the very first water. (*Aside.*) Real diamonds? Ha, ha, ha! dat ish very good! dat ish very pleasant! Real diamonds? Well dat ish very good!

Nic. What are they?

Bal. Real diamonds! Ha, ha, ha! I wonder you don't call them sapphires or topazes, or onyx's, or rubies, or emeralds. Real diamonds, well, dat ish very good! dat ish very pleasant indeed!

Nic. Well, but what are they?

Bal. Chrystal, rock chrystal, very pretty rock chrystals. Real diamonds, Ha, ha, ha!

Nic. Well, I thought they couldn't be diamonds! they are set in gold however?

Bal. Oh yesh, they are certainly set in gold; I might deceive you in that particular, but I scorn to impose upon my friend.

Nic. Well, what d'ye bid?

Bal. Me? Oh, I've no mind to purchase. I must have it at any price. (*Aside.*) The gold to be sure is worth a trifle, but as for the stones, I wouldn't

pick them up in the street. Besides, I am so unlucky in all my bargains with you. The last oyster pearls I bought of you I was a great loser by; but you are my friend, and I don't mind if I do sometimes make a losing bargain with my friends.

Nic. That's fair; for your friends, I believe, make a great many losing bargains with you.

Bal. Ha, ha, ha! You will have your joke, you will have your joke, I see. I must have the necklace tho'.

Nic. At one word, you shall have it for twenty ducats.

Bal. Dat is too much, upon my conscience it is too much. It is worth a thousand at least. (*Aside*). Times are very hard! Provisions very dear! I gave yesterday a florin a pound for mutton; then the weather is so fine, the sea is so smooth, and they build their ships so damn'd tight, there has been only one boat overset for this month past, and that was whilst I was at synagogue. And as for a shipwreck, mercy on me! there hasn't been a shipwreck these twelve months.

Nic. What, at your old tricks, friend Balthazar? Come, come, shall I have the money?

Bal. Well, 'tis a hard price upon my shoul! a very hard price! Yet you know I don't like to haggle with my friends. Twenty ducats! what will become

of me! Well, you must have the money—yet upon my honour 'tis a very hard price. Times are very hard, provisions very dear! Well, well, you must have the money; dere ish the twenty ducats, and much good may you do with them!

Nic. And there is the necklace, and much good may it do you!

Bal. Well, they are pretty chrystals enough, very pretty chrystals indeed! It will do for my daughter Leah—or another very much like it. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*

NICOLINO *solus.*

A lucky stroke of fortune will do more for a man in a minute than a week's drudgery. I might have had thirty, I believe, if I had stood out; but in driving a bargain I'm no match for a Jew.—My trade is to catch fish his to snare men; and tho' I understand my business tolerably, I believe he's the more successful angler of the two.

AIR 6th.

I.

Most fish that inhabit the sea
With my net I can take now and then,
Yet how much more successful is he
Who can thrive as a fisher of men:

For tho' some are as simple as dace,
And greedy as gudgeons a few,
Yet I fancy that is not the case
With a lawyer, a maid, or a Jew.

II.

Your lawyer some say is a shark,
Yet he preys both by land and by water;
And perhaps 'twould be nearer the mark,
If we dubb'd him a black alligator.
To catch him there is but one rule,
A rogue can best hamper his brother;
And they tell me, like pikes in a pool,
Your lawyers will bite one another.

III.

For cunning a Jew has no match,
He'll slip through your hands like an eel;
And maids are still harder to catch,
When of youth the first blushes they feel:
But with patience an angler must wait
Till older and older they grow,
When like trouts they'll all rise at his bait,
Tho' a feather—the very first throw. [*Exit.*

Scene

Enter Crier, People, and BALTHAZAR *following.*

Crier. " To all Catholic people: whereas divers " villains unknown, and whose persons cannot there- " fore be described, have privately, and in open " defiance of all law, traitorously, libellously, " wickedly, maliciously, and flagitiously, being insti- " gated by the prince of darkness, carried off or " eloped with the Countess of Modena, that angel " of light."

Bal. Carried off a countess? Well, dat ish no business of mine!

Crier. " This is to give notice, that whoever will " apprehend and discover, or discover and apprehend " these unchristian ravishers and violators, whether " male or female, shall receive a reward of one thou- " sand ducats."

Bal. One thousand ducats? Oh, dat ish business of every body's. My dear friend, did you say one thousand ducats?

Crier. Don't friend me—I wasn't speaking to you. —" To all Catholic people."

Bal. Yesh, but you should always read that part of a proclamation twice, which speaks of the reward. —But did you say one thousand ducats?

Crier. A reward of one thousand ducats—one half to be paid on the fact being proved, and the other after release.

BAL. (*Aside.*) One thousand ducats—mercy on me, one thousand ducats!

Crier. "The countess, at the time of her being "carried off, had on a blue silk gown, several valu- "able rings, and a diamond necklace."

Bal. Mercy on me, what does he say? a diamond necklace? My dear friend, do repeat that part of the proclamation, tho' I am not a Catholic—Did you say the countess had on a diamond necklace?

Crier. A blue gold—Psha! I wish you would not put me out.—A blue silk gown, several valuable rings, and a diamond necklace. [*Exit, with the people.*

BALTHAZAR *solus.*

Mercy on me, what is this? The countess carried off and had on a diamond necklace? Then my dear friend Nicolino is a rogue! Caught it in his net! If this necklace should be the countess's, and it should be found upon me, the excellence of my character would hardly save my neck. I will go for the officers of justice—But then if I should bring my dear friend to the gallows? It would go against my conscience to hang my friend—but to hang myself,

that would be suicide. Oh! that would go more against my conscience. If one of us must be exalted, it is but common politeness to give the preference to my friend, which, in such a case, I am sure he would give to me.—I will go for the officers of justice.

AIR 7th.

When I was a very little boy,
And sat on my father's knee,
He call'd me his darling, his pride, and his joy,
And my pretty Balthazar, said he,
Whilst you live, be more willing to borrow than lend,
For the world is a scramble for pelf.
And tho' you should now and then think of a friend,
You must always remember yourself.
So I look'd something roguish, but made no reply,
Yet my father was pleas'd with the turn of my eye,
And my dear mother said,
As she patted my head,
I think that Balthazar will do bye and bye. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene 1*st.*—*Justice* STEPHANO*'s.*

STEPHANO *followed by* ROSANO.

Ros. I will have justice, sir, speedy justice.

Steph. Well, sir, you shall have justice—hav'n't I quickened her pace with a reward. Don't I know the efficacy of a bribe? Am I ignorant of my office? Advertize a rogue without a reward, what's every body's business is nobody's business—offer a thousand ducats for apprehending him, what's nobody's business becomes every body's business immediately. Well, sir.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. Nicolino the fisherman is without, charged by Balthazar the Jew with having been concerned in carrying off the Countess of Modena.

Steph. How?

Ros. Are you sure the countess?

Serv. Certain, sir.

Steph. Bring them before me. (*Exit* SERVANT.) There, sir! you see justice does not quite limp upon crutches.—I knew your public-spirited men would bestir themselves the moment they heard of the reward.

Enter NICOLINO, BALTHAZAR, *&c.*

Nic. Indeed, my lord, I'm innocent!

Steph. Who is your accuser?

Bal. It ish I.—I am his friend and accuser.

Steph. You, Signor Balthazar?

Bal. Yesh, I.

Steph. Speak then! what is your charge?

Ros. Quickly, quickly, sir!

Bal. You must know, as I was going my rounds this morning to see if I could pick up any thing in my way of business, any pearls, or shells, or trinkets, for you know it is my business to buy the shells, and the pearls, and the trinkets—

Ros. Well, well!

Steph. Silence! To the point, Signor Balthazar, if you please.

Bal. So you see I went into the house of my friend Nicolino, for he is one of the oldest of all my friends—

Ros. Psha! to the point, sir!

Steph. Again signor! (*To* ROSANO.) You either forget yourself, or don't remember who I am—proceed!

Bal. So I asked him if he had any thing to dispose of in my way, and he put his hand in his pocket and pulled out this necklace. (*Produces the necklace.*)

Ros. By heav'n, 'tis hers; she had it on at parting!

Steph. Proceed if you please—

Bal. So finding it wash diamonds—

Nic. Chrystals! As I am a Christian he swore they were only chrystals, and gave me twenty ducats for it—Didn't you tell me they were only chrystals.

Bal. Yesh, yesh, I told him they were only chrystals, I confess I told him they were chrystals. If I had said they were diamonds he would never have parted with them, and then there would have been no proof of the fact you know.

Nic. As I live he swore they were only chrystals!

Steph. That doesn't signify. Is this the necklace you sold him?

Nic. It is the same.

Steph. Proceed, Balthazar, proceed—

Bal. So finding they were diamonds, and suspecting he had got them dishonestly, I pretended to buy them for myself, and hearing the countess was carried off, I have apprehended him: for tho' he is my friend, yet, thank heaven, I can sacrifice my friend to the good of my country, and here I have brought him, and I hope he will be able to give a good account of himself.

Steph. You have done well, and your country is obliged to you. And now, sir! Don't be frighten'd, young man! Where did you get this necklace?

Nic. Drew it on shore in my net.

Bal. Dat vash what he told me.

Ros. Impossible!

Steph. Recollect yourself, and don't be frightened. I ask you again—where did you get this necklace?

Ros. He hesitates, put him to the torture!

Steph. Sir, I shan't put him to the torture!

Bal. Oh no; do not put my dear friend to the torture!

Steph. Punish a man before he is found guilty? Fye fye, fye! Put him to the torture? Break a man's bones upon speculation?

Ros. His looks proclaim his guilt.

Steph. Very likely, but I sit here as a judge and not as a physiognomist. So speak, young man, without fear of the torture; where did you get this necklace?

Nic. Indeed I have spoken truth. Three times I cast my net into the sea and it came back empty. The fourth time as I drew it towards the shore I saw something glitter within it like a star. At first I took it for some strange fish. Would it had been one. That was the thing I saw. I hastened home and sold it to the Jew. 'Twas a bad act, I should have sought the owner, for that my heart smites me, but of any other crime, I am as innocent as the unborn babe.

Steph. 'Tis a very strange story, young man, a very strange story indeed!

Nic. Upon my life, 'tis true!

Ros. It is impossible!

Steph. Silence, once more! The Countess has disappeared, probably ravished, possibly murdered.

Nic. God forbid!

Steph. This is the necklace she had on, it has been found on you. The story you have told is improbable, though it may be true; for the present you must go to jail.

Nic. My lord! to jail? Upon my soul I'm innocent.

Steph. Or, hold! You shall have till sunset to search for the Countess. Set him at liberty! 'Till sunset you are free! But observe me! If you attempt to escape, the next tree shall be your gallows, and the first man you meet your executioner.

Nic. Would I had ne'er been born.

[*Exeunt all but* ROSANO.

ROSANO *solus.*

AIR 8th.

I.

Lost are the visions of life's early morn
When pleasure breath'd her spicy gales around,
Hope's gentle sorcery shall no more adorn,
With thousand rainbow-tints, the fairy ground;

II.

O'er which young fancy erst her votary led;
Chased by severer reason's beams away,
The flattering phantoms of delight are fled,
As morning mists before the blaze of day.

III.

Oh! could I linger in that blissful trance,
With hope still whispering joy for ever near,
Then might I mock the rage of rude mischance,
Dead to the world, to sorrow and to care. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Justice's House.

JUSTICE *and* MARTHA.

Mar. Indeed, Mr. Justice, he is innocent. Carry off a countess! He wouldn't lift up his hand against a fly.

Steph. He must go to prison for all that.

Mar. But not to-night?

Steph. At sunset, unless the lady is found and declares his innocence.

Mar. You will not have the heart to send him there.

Steph. No; I have already commanded it to be done.

Mar. But you may yet prevent it.

Steph. May? Oh yes, I may prevent it. I have the power no doubt. I can punish, and I can pardon. Yes, yes, I may prevent it certainly: there are ways of saving a man from the gallows, tho' he has the halter about his neck. But then, what is it to me? Why should I interfere?

Mar. For mercy's sake, which teaches man to spare the guilty, much more to save the innocent.

Steph. And what does it teach woman, Mrs. Martha? Come, come, one good turn deserves another. If you expect I should shew mercy to your brother, you must have a little pity for me.

Mar. So, so, so. (*Aside.*) What, you would have me sacrifice my honour to save his life.

Steph. Your honour? Now is that talking like a woman of sense? You know your reputation will be safe, and then what signifies your honour?

Mar. Aye, but when a man has ruined a woman's virtue, he cares little about her reputation.

Steph. Very true! But if he cares a good deal for his own, you know it's much the same thing.

Mar. Why that's true! There's something in that

to be sure;—and if I thought you would really save him—

Steph. Really save him? Only suffer me to pay you a short, snug, charitable visit this evening, a little after sunset, and I'll bring his pardon in my pocket.

Mar. But then, then, the scandal of the thing—for a grave judge like you, to pay a charitable visit to a poor fisherman's sister—If you would come in some sort of a disguise now—

Steph. I have no objection to that; none in the least. Only ensure me the pleasure of the meeting, and any of my friends are welcome to the reputation of it.

Mar. Let me see then! What think you of your friend Balthazar? You know he sometimes visits at our house: suppose you dress yourself like him.

Steph. What! turn Jew?

Mar. Psha! d'ye think he wouldn't turn Christian upon such an occasion?

Steph: But then you know, he's my friend.

Mar. And therefore you have a natural right to make free with his character. I'm sure he'd make very little scruple with yours.

Steph. But hold! hold! if I should consent to soften matters, how will you silence Balthazar.

Mar. Oh! a bribe, you know, will do for him.

Steph. Right, he's a mercenary dog, and would sooner be tempted by a purse of ducats than a paradise of houris! (*A servant enters, and whispers the judge.*) Aye, aye, I'll come immediately. You won't forget—soon after sunset—a soft tap at the door.

Mar. Remember the pardon.

Steph. Yes, yes, do you get an absolution ready for my sins, and I'll have a pardon for his, depend upon it!

Mar. Oh! Mr. Justice, your worship is a sad man.

Steph. No, no, you mean you are a pretty girl; tho' if you had been old and ugly, I would have done you justice. I do strict justice to the whole sex; tho', to confess the truth, when I meet with such a woman as you, I am too apt to exceed it.

AIR 9th.

The sight of an ill-favoured wench
Ne'er perplexes a judge in his duty,
But who that e'er sat on the bench
Has been proof to the magic of beauty;

Tho' clear as the day her offence is,
And all fear that nothing can save her,
Yet her eye full of woe
And her bosom of snow
And her blushing cheek in her favour
Are strange evidence:
So feeling temptation within,
Her crimes he resolves to connive at,
And acquits her in court of one sin,
To teach her another in private. [*Exit.*

MARTHA *sola.*

So, so, so, Mr. Justice; if you bring me a pardon for Nicolino, I'll take care you shall want no absolution for yourself—but hush!

The Jew enters, speaking to the servants without.

Bal. (*To Servants.*) Well, well, don't disturb him, I can wait a little.—Ha, Mrs. Martha! This is a pleasure I didn't expect. What you are come, I suppose, to plead the cause of your poor brother?

Mar. Your friend you mean, whom you first cheated, and then betray'd,—

Bal. Well, if I cheated my friend, it was out of love for you

Mar. Love for me?

Bal. Yesh, I meant the necklace for you; your charms, your eyes, your lips, your shape—theyare all accomplices.

Mar. And you betrayed him out of love for me?

Bal. Oh no, that wash out of love for my country! But you know he's not hanged yet; and if you could only cast upon me the look of affection —

Mar. Well, what then?

Bal. Why then I think I could contrive to soften the evidence a little. Let those eyes shine comfort upon me, and they shall drop no more tears for Nicolino.

Mar. That is, you'll be a rogue, if I'll consent to be—something a great deal worse.

Bal. Pho, pho! you know I would marry you, but it is against my religion and my conscience.

Mar. And what does your conscience say to ruining a poor girl?

Bal. Oh! my conscience says nothing at all about that.

Mar. Then your conscience is a very easy one.

Bal. Yesh, a good man has always an easy conscience.

Mar. Why, you see it isn't so much the thing itself

as the scandal of it that I'm afraid of—If I thought you would certainly be secret.

Bal. Aye, now you talk like a woman of sense. Secret! do you take me for a young rake who chatters his gallantries over his wine? What can I get by blabbing?

Mar. True; then upon one condition —

Bal. What ish dat?

Mar. That you dress yourself like a Christian.

Bal. Oh! if dat ish all, I will dress myself like a Turk, a Christian, or a —

Mar. Well then—in the first place, you must cut off your beard.

Bal. Cut off my beard? Ash I hope to be shaved, I will not cut off my beard!

Mar. Then Nicolino must be hanged, and I will remain an honest woman.

Bal. But why should I cut off my beard?

Mar. Because you must dress yourself like Signor Stephano; he, you know, is a judge, and by virtue of his office may visit any body at any hour.

Bal. But then, if I should be discovered?

Mar. No fear of that; nobody dares peep under the robe of a judge.

Bal. Well, dat ish true; and then you know —

he, he, ha! I shall have the pleasure of the thing, and he — ha, ha, ha! will have the reputation of it!

Mar. Yes — ha, ha, ha, ha!

Bal. I dare say he'd do as much for me.

Mar. That I'm sure he would.

Bal. But hold! hold! If I consent to soften the evidence, how will you prevail upon his worship?

Mar. Pho! I've settled matters with him already.

Bal. What, a bribe, I suppose?

Mar. Yes.

Bal. Oh, he's a sad mercenary dog. Well, well, then; a little after eight you shall see Signor Stephano — ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, or somebody very much like him — ha, ha, ha!

Bal. Ha, ha, ha! very good! but can't it be done without my cutting off my beard?

Mar. Oh, no, impossible. You know your beard will grow again.

Bal. Dat ish true. I did not think of that. Hark! I hear Signor Stephano: you'll see me a little after eight.

Mar. You won't forget the pardon.

Bal. No, no! (*As* MARTHA *goes out on one side the Stage,* STEPHANO *enters on the other.*) I don't

like cutting off my beard.—But hush! Signor Stephano, your very humble servant. How shall I break it to him. (*Aside.*)

Steph. I understand you have business with me, Signor Balthazar. I hope he'll begin the subject. (*Aside.*)

Bal. Why, I must confess there is an affair I wished to have consulted you upon; but then it is a melancholy business, and I do not like to make my friends melancholy. I have been thinking, Signor Stephano, of my poor friend Nicolino, who is to be hanged to-morrow; and though my conscience was his accuser, yet his fate touches my bowels with pity and commiseration.

Steph. The very thing. (*Aside.*) Why, Signor Balthazar, to confess the truth — I don't know how it is — there's no accounting, you know, for the influence of the tender feelings — but I can't help pitying the young man, myself: but then, you know, justice ——

Bal. Yesh, I know justice must be done: but mercy, Signor Stephano — my dear friend, Signor Stephano, mercy, you know —

Steph. Why, that's true! Justice should be tempered with mercy. 'Tis a hard case, I must confess.

Bal. Oh, yesh, a very hard case.

Steph. But then, the necklace being found in his possession ——

Bal. Why, dat ish a little aukward, to be sure.

Steph. But then, you know, it's possible he may have found it.

Bal. Do you think it possible?

Steph. Yes, I do think it very possible.

Bal. Upon my conscience, I think it probable.

Steph. I think it very probable myself: and then, as you observe, there's no positive proof against him.

Bal. None at all. If I should hang an innocent man, and my friend too ——

Steph. You'd be damn'd, to a certainty.

Bal. I should never sleep in my bed without seeing his gibbet, and hearing the rattling of his chains!

Steph. Nor I. Then, to cut him off in the very bloom of his youth!

Bal. Not yet twenty.

Steph. And his poor sister!

Bal. Will be left quite desolate.

Steph. Nobody to comfort her!

Bal. Nobody!

Steph. I declare it brings the tears into my eyes. (*Weeps.*)

Bal. So it does into mine, I protest. (*Weeps.*) I have been thinking, Signor Stephano ——

Steph. Well?

Bal. That if——

Steph. What?

Bal. We were to endeavour——

Steph. To save him?

Bal. Yesh.

Steph. Agreed—your hand—

Bal. You're a merciful man, Signor Stephano! A very merciful man!

Steph. It's in my nature: I can't help it.

Balt. My own failing—I've too much of the milk of human kindness, myself.

AIR 10th. (Duet.)

Bal. Shall we save him? *Step.* Agreed!
Both. 'Tis a merciful deed,
Not to cheat of his fee the physician.
Bal. Oh, I rather would die,
Twenty deaths, *Step.* So would I,
Both. Than hang a young man on suspicion.
Steph. Both early and late,
The thought of his fate,
To my conscience 'twould stick like a blister.
Bal. And if he should swing,
What a terrible thing,
It would be for his poor little sister!

Steph. Fatherless and motherless!
Bal. Sisterless and brotherless!
Left to mourn!
Steph. Forlorn!
Who shall hear her sigh?
Bal. Who her tears shall dry?
Both. Alas! I fear, neither you nor I.

Steph. 'Twould be kind just to step and tell her not to make herself too unhappy.

Bal. So it would.

Steph. I'll do it immediately.

Bal. My dear friend, I can't think of giving you the trouble: it is in my way, and I'll just look in and quiet her apprehension.—Oh, Signor! if every body felt for the distresses of their fellow-creatures, like you and me, the world would be very different from what it is. [*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Sea Shore.—NICOLINO *and* LEAH.

Nic. A murderer? Leah, do I look like a murderer?

Leah. Nay, be comforted, Nicolino: I am sure you are innocent.

Nic. Innocent? Heaven knows I am innocent. Commit a murder, and in the broad day-light too! Thou knowest when our cat kitten'd I could not find in my heart to have one of them drown'd. I've

a dog that's past service, yet before I'd hang him, I'd starve with him. Why, the tree, the old tree, that stands by the hut's side, I once had the axe in my hand, but I couldn't strike, lest there should be life in it.

Leah. Yes, Nicolino; and when I made your last net —

Nic. Curse on the net; not but that I am equally obliged to you, Leah:—but what were you going to say?

Leah. You told me again and again to make the meshes big enough for the little fish to escape.

Nic. So I did; yet they say I'm a murderer; that I have murder'd a fellow-creature, and that fellow-creature a woman! and that woman a Countess!

Leah. Nay, don't grieve so; let the worst come to the worst, you know you are innocent.

Nic. Why, to be sure, that will be a great consolation to me after I'm hang'd. You comfort me more like a wife than a mistress. Didn't you hear a noise?

Leah. No; 'tis your fancy.

Nic. True, that makes a sound in every thing. —Again! that is not fancy, there is some one stirring in the rock: this way, softly; this way. [*They retire.*

The Two SAILORS *who carried off the* COUNTESS *come forward from the rock.*

1*st Sail.* She cannot escape, comrade.

2*d Sail.* No, no, she's safe enough.

1*st Sail.* So is that damn'd necklace, I fear: what a couple of lubbers have we been to fight for a prize, which by all the laws of war we ought to have divided at leisure.

2*d Sail.* Well, well, that's past: we have some hopes yet. There has been a huge swell, and who knows but the surf may have thrown it ashore?

1*st Sail.* Along then.

2*d Sail.* If we find it, no more fighting; you and I at best, I'm afraid, are but a couple of rogues; but we must be sad dogs indeed to attempt to cheat one another. [*Exeunt.*

NICOLINO *and* LEAH *come forward.*

Nic. They have turn'd the point, and are clear out of sight.

Leah. You heard them talk of a necklace?

Nic. Yes, Leah, and of a lady. If it should be the Countess.

Leah. Oh, Nicolino! if we should get the reward.

Nic. Hark! (*The* COUNTESS *sings from the interior of the rock.*)

AIR 11th.

Spirits of the unfathom'd deep,
Who mid the storm your vigils keep,
Catching with greedy ears,
Of sinking mariners,
The dying groans;
Yet o'er their white unshrouded bones,
Will sometimes weep.

Leah. It must be she: none but the countess could sing so sweetly.

Nic. 'Tis either she or a mermaid—Hark!

Oh! leave them to their wat'ry grave,
And ye who on the flagging whirlwind sleep,
Awake, arise, a living soul to save,
Spirits of the unfathom'd deep.

Leah. She has done now.

Nic. Hush! yes, quite done. I'll venture in.

Leah. Nay, stop: there may be fifty more of them: and perhaps it may not be the Countess after all.

Nic. No matter, 'tis the voice of a woman in distress, and I will enter if there should be an hundred. I had better die like a man to-night, in doing an act of humanity, than be hang'd like a scoundrel to-morrow, for a crime I never committed.

Leah. Then you shall take me with you!

Nic. No, you must stay without; and if these fellows should return before I have done my business, you must contrive to draw them from the spot: so shut the entrance after me. (*She shuts the cave after him.*)

Leah. (*sola.*) How my heart flutters! If it should be the Countess, and we should get the reward — Hark! every thing is still. (*Listens at the cave.*) A thousand ducats: hush! I hear footsteps — all is lost — they've turn'd the corner again, and are coming this way. (*She retires.*)

Enter SAILORS.

2d Sail. Gone, past redemption.

1st Sail. Yes, by this time it's become a fixt star at the bottom of the sea: but it's time we should take a peep at the lady. (*As they go towards the rock,* LEAH *comes forward, and sings.*)

AIR 12th.

Would you Fortune's minions be,
Mariners, come follow me!

1st Sail. Follow you? and who the devil are you?

2d Sail. Hush! messmate; she has a nice pipe of her own. (LEAH *sings.*)

I in darkest night can peep,
Twenty fathoms in the deep,
With my piercing eye can sound,
Where no plummet ere touch'd ground,
And all things at bottom see,
Mariners, come follow me.

1*st Sail.* The devil you can! Are you a witch or a fairy? (LEAH *sings.*)

I will shew you precious store,
Cast from wrecks upon the shore,
Lead you to each secret shell
Where a precious pearl doth dwell;
And if diamonds you would see,
Mariners come follow me.

[*She runs out, and they after her.*

NICOLINI *and* COUNTESS.

Nic. This way, lady — nay, look not strange upon me: I am your friend, your deliverer —

Count. If you should betray me ——

Nic. Betray you?

Count. And yet I think you will not — you look honest.

Nic. Yes, I am a poor, yet honest fisherman: my hut is near at hand; and if I do not safely take you to

to it, may I die like a rascal, or, what's a greater punishment, may I live like one.

Coun. Be faithful, and you shall not want for recompence.

Nic. I am already paid. [*Exeunt.*

(DURAZZO's *vessel appears at a distance and fires the salute agreed upon, which not being returned, he and part of his crew come in the boat to the cavern on the side nearest the sea, and having searched it, come through to the passage from which the Fisherman and Countess have escaped.*)

Dur. Curse on them both!

Sail. There is no Countess there.

Dur. Nor has been; they are either drunk or treacherous — Fool that I was to trust them.

Sail. Hush! hush! look out, noble Captain — There's a petticoat yonder!

Dur. 'Tis she, by heav'n! — Who is the fellow on whose arm she leans?

2d. Sail. The fisherman Nicolino.—See, they are going towards his hut.

Dur. Then she is mine yet! Fasten the boat to the rock, and follow me!

AIR 13th. (Chorus.)

Softly, softly steal,
As ye circle round
Yon upland ground;
The whisp'ring sound
Let echo hear, but not reveal.

Quick let your pace, and silent be,
As fairy feet
The greensward greet,
As the dews of night
On the blossoms light,
Or the moon-beams trip along the sea.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene, the Sea-side.

LEAH, *and Sailors following her.*

Leah. (*singing.*) Mariners, come follow me!

1*st Sail.* Follow you? Egad, I'll follow you no further: I should like to know where this devil's dance is to end.

2*d Sail.* It shall end here with me.

1*st Sail.* I begin to think she's only playing the fool with us.

Leah. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

2*d Sail.* What does she laugh at?

Leah. At you, to be sure — ha, ha, ha, ha!

2*d Sail.* Oh, ho! What, you're flesh and blood, are you.

Leah. Nothing else, I assure you.

1*st Sail.* Egad! I'll be convinced of that. (*Catches hold of her.*) Flesh and blood, sure enough! though I shan't be quite certain till I have tried her lips.

Leah. Nay, if you attempt to be rude, I'll raise such a set of spirits!

2*d Sail.* Spirits, quotha! Thou hast raised my flesh and blood, and I'll have one kiss.

Leah. Keep your distance!

2d Sail. Nay, I will have one smack, I'm determined.

Leah. Take it then. (*Hits him a box of the ear, and attempts to run off, but is caught by the other sailor.*)

1st Sail. Not so fast, my pretty will o' the wisp: you have led us a dance; you see, and now you shall pay the piper. Let's take her to the rock.

2d Sail. Yes, yes, you may as well come by fair means. (LEAH *cries out for help, and as they are carrying her off,* NICOLINO, *&c. come to her relief, and beat off the sailors.*)

Scene 2d. — NICOLINO, &c. *and* LEAH.

Leah. Oh, Nicolino! you came just in time: I don't know what they would have done with me.

Nic. No matter, you have played your part to a miracle.

Leah. Have you got the lady safe off?

Nic. Yes.

Leah. And is it the countess?

Nic. Yes.

Leah. And shall we have the reward?

Nic. Every ducat. Zounds! my heart jumps about like a flying fish. A thousand ducats! And the countess has promised to add five hundred more. And —what dy'e think, Leah?

Leah. Think? I cannot think, I am too happy to think!

Nic. She has promised to procure thy father's consent to our marriage, and to stand godmother to our first boy.

Leah. Psha! Nonsense!

AIR 14th. (Duet.)

Nic. Since, then, no more
Nicolino is poor,
Your father no more his consent will deny.
And if he should
Be still so rude,
His daughter, without it, perhaps may comply.

Nic. Why then the point is carried.
We may fix the day;
Lovely Leah say,
When shall we be married?
To-morrow? *Leah.* Pho!

Nic. On Friday? *Leah.* No.

Nic. Then on Saturday?

Leah. No, nor on Monday.

Nic. I'll be hang'd but you mean
The day between.

Leah. Perhaps I may mean
The day between.

Both. Yes, yes, it shall be on Sunday. [*Exeunt.*

Scene 3d. * *The Fisherman's Cottage.*

The COUNTESS *and* MARTHA.

Coun. So, to save your brother's life, you have promised them both that you would sacrifice your honour?

Mar. Yes, madam; but indeed I am innocent, and can assure your ladyship that what I promised I never meant to perform.

Coun. Well, well, girl! do as I have directed, and take this letter to my steward: it contains some instructions for him to prepare for their reception: you'll have time to return before they come.

Mar. Yes, madam, I'll be back immediately.

[*Exit.*

Coun. (*Sola.*) So, I think this will be the last love adventure of this honest Jew, whose conscience would'nt let his daughter marry a Christian; and of the merciful judge who would acquit the guilty for the sake of corrupting the innocent.

* This scene was wholly omitted in the representation.

AIR 15th.

I.

Escap'd from the net
Which the fowler had set,
The bird feels his spirit elate;
And conscious, like me,
That his pinions are free,
He spreads them to welcome his mate.

II.

Yet I tremble, I fear,
At each sound that I hear;
My bosom with care is opprest;
Then safe in love's arms,
Let me hush the alarms
Of my heart, till it flutters to rest.

[*As she is singing the latter part of the song,* DURAZZO *and the Sailors enter behind, suddenly seize her and bear her off.*

Scene, that part of the Shore where DURAZZO *had landed;—his boat is fixed to the Rock, and his Ship appears at a distance. He enters with his Crew and the Countess.*

Dur. Quickly unloose the boat!

Coun. Durazzo, hear me.

Dur. When thou art safe on board, I'll hear thee, lady,
As I would listen to the nightingale.
Is all prepared? [*To the Sailors.*

Sail. All's ready, noble captain; but 'twill be impossible to reach the ship. The sea runs mountains. See how she dances our vessel about like a cork; and to have such a swell in an open boat ——

Dur. Coward!

Sail. No coward, either; but 'twould be little better than drowning oneself, to volunteer it to Davy's locker.

Another Sail. Look, noble captain, she's on her beam ends. See, if she be not swallowed up. (*The Sailors give a loud shriek.*) She rights again — no, all's lost — her lights are dash'd out — hark! her signals.

Dur. Peace, dastards!

Another Sail. All's over with her now: you can but just see her main-top — down she goes — down, down — look, look! (*They look for some time.*) You can see nothing of her now.

Dur. Well, let her sink! Now fate and I have grappled;
And when I shrink — Fly, some of you, to the port,

And give the alarm! Begone! The rest with me.
Firm as a rock my castle yet remains,
Which laughs to scorn the battle of the waves.
Earthquakes, indeed, may gape and swallow it.
All mortal hazard I defy.

AIR 16th. (Song.)

O'er my poor shatter'd bark, as they throng mountains high,
The billows triumphant may roll;
And the flash to its victim may light thro' the sky
The thunder — but calm is my soul.
For the thunder shall cease, and the waves that now roar,
Soon lie silently scatter'd in foam on the shore.

Chorus.

Away to the castle, quick, bear her away!
Let him set her free,
(And what mortal is he),
Who can tear from the gripe of the lion his prey.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, the Fisherman's Cottage.

Mar. (*As entering.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha! We shall have rare sport at the Countess's! There's to be a

masquerade, and a great entertainment, to receive my two lovers: and if I can only perform my part with success, it will be one of the best jokes — ha, ha, ha! (*A knock at the door.*) So, so, honest Mr. Balthazar, that's your knock I'm sure. Within a minute of his time. Your old sinners are always punctual, because ——

[*She opens the door, and* BALTHAZAR *enters, disguised as the Judge.*

Bal. Are you quite alone?

Mar. Don't you see I am?

Bal. I was afraid you had company. Didn't I hear somebody laugh?

Mar. 'Twas me. I had just fallen asleep, and was dreaming what a fool you were making of Signor Stephano: I awoke myself with laughing.

Bal. Yes; and I have been making a pretty fool of myself! I have been cutting off my beard. It is not for every woman I would cut off my beard; but you, Mrs. Martha, can make me do any thing. I have settled your business with the judge.

Mar. And so have I yours. (*Aside.*)

Bal. We have agreed that Nicolini shall be pardoned — I thought Signor Stephano was a hard-hearted man, but I find him merciful, very merciful.

He pities you very much — he wanted to call and tell you so, but you know there was no occasion for that.

Mar. None in the least.

Bal. So I told him he need not give himself the trouble; for, you know, when a man feels for the distresses of a woman, and a young woman, and a beautiful young woman; there is no knowing how far his pity may carry him! (*A knocking at the door.*) Bless my soul! what ish dat?

Mar. Hush!

Steph. (*Without.*) Mrs. Martha, Mrs. Martha!

Bal. 'Tis his voice as I live!

Mar. Was ever any thing so unfortunate? why didn't you persuade him not to come?

Bal. You won't let him in?

Mar. Refuse to open the door to a judge?

Bal. What will become of me?

Mar. Here, here, can't you get into this cloaths-press? (*Opens the folding doors of a cloaths-press, which has a partition down the middle.*)

Bal. Impossible!

Steph. (*Without.*) Mrs. Martha, I say?

Mar. He won't stay five minutes.

Bal. I shall be smother'd in half the time!

Mar. In, in; I'll dispatch him immediately.

Bal. If you don't, you'll dispatch me.

Mar. Pho, pho, you'll have plenty of air through the key-hole —

Balt. Thro' the key hole? oh, what will become of me? (*She locks him up in one side of the press.*)

Mar. So I have caged one of my turtle-doves safely, now for the other — (*Opens the door, and Signor* STEPHANO *enters disguised as the Jew.*)

Step. Well, you little jade, what made you so long before you opened the door?

Mar. You were in such a hurry — I was only locking something up in the cloaths-press.

Steph. Well, you little jade, here I am! Why don't you laugh at me? (*She laughs.*) That's right, laugh at me heartily, or I shall think I am but half metamorphosed. (*She turns him about, and laughs heartily.*) Well, havn't I done it completely? Ha! ha! ha!

Mar. I think you have, ha! ha! ha!

Steph. Don't I cut a very ridiculous figure, ha! ha! ha!

Mar. Very! Ha! ha! ha!

Steph. Did you ever know a man make a greater fool of himself, ha! ha! ha!

Mar. Never! Ha! ha! ha!

Steph. Ha! ha! ha! but to be serious; you have seen Balthazar, I suppose?

Mar. No.

Steph. He promised to call, but I suppose he'll take some other opportunity?

Mar. Very likely.

Steph. He's a good soul, and I can assure you, felt for your distresses, as if they had been his own; would you believe it, when he talk'd of your situation, he was absolutely in tears.

Mar. Kind-hearted creature!

Steph. Tho' a judge, I could not forbear weeping myself.

Mar. Poor Nicolino, then, has nothing to fear.

Steph. Nothing, and every thing to hope. Well, and now we're quite snug and alone —

Mar. Yes, there are only three of us.

Steph. Hey! what? three of us?

Mar. Why, you know, there's myself one, and you are two.

Steph. Ha, ha! ha, well, that is a very good joke; and the best of the joke is, that I am at once your gallant and your confessor; as a Jew I can't commit more sin than as a judge I can pardon, and — (*A knocking at the door.*) What the devil's that?

Mar. 'Tis he!

Steph. What, Balthazar?

Mar. Yes, I know his rap:

Steph. Well, you know you're not at home —

Mart. Yes, but he knows I am at home.

Steph. What can you do with me?

Mart. Hush! You can step in here for a minute (*opening the cloaths-press door*).

Steph. What, make a close prisoner of a judge?

Mar. Well, well, never mind; I shall be your jailor, and shall release you presently.

Steph. Why look you, as a judge I cannot submit to it, but as a Jew, I must submit to every thing. — You'll send him off immediately?

Mar. Oh! you may depend upon it, (*Locks him up.*) I'll send you both off immediately: Aye, you may now bill and coo to one another. (*Comes forward on the stage.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh! when they come to be turn'd out before the whole company, ha, ha, ha! how they will look at one another, ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughing, and never be able to go thro' with the joke.

[*Exit.*

*Scene, the Sea Shore.**

Enter the two SAILORS *who carried off the* COUNTESS.

1*st Sail.* A pretty day's work we have made of it, first to lose the necklace, afterwards to lose the lady, and for our Captain to lose his ship — It runs in my head that you and I, instead of being tickled in the

* This scene was altered and improved in the representation.

palm of the hand, shall have our reward scored upon our backs; and instead of having a diamond necklace between us, we may very likely have one made of hemp.

2d Sail. Hush! hush! Here comes Signor Rosano: now if we can but persuade him that our Captain has taken his prize to the castle, we may make our peace yet.

1st Sail. Well thought on, stand by!

Enter ROSANO.

Ros. Some say it was Morani's ship that sunk;
Others, with firmer tone, yet they not certain,
Pronounce it was Durazzo's. —

AIR 17th.

I.

Whither shall I their path pursue,
What reason can my footsteps guide;
Or how shall judgment find a clue,
When fortune only can decide.

II.

The miser robb'd of all his store,
Thus fearfully his steps doth measure,
And circles round the hallow'd spot,
Which lodg'd his only treasure:
For where it was still fancy paints the scene,
Fairer than that, where it has never been.

Ros. Well met, friends!
Know you whose vessel 'twas that founder'd?

Sail. Durazzo's.

Ros. Are you sure?

1*st Sail.* We should be, seeing as how we are of his ship's crew.

Ros. Was he on board?

2*d Sail.* No, no, he's safe enough at his castle.

Ros. Are you sure of that?
I am his friend, and fain would know the truth.

1*st Sail.* He pass'd us here but now.

Ros. Alone?

2*d Sail.* No, there was great part of the crew with him, and a lady.

Ros. What, young and handsome?

1*st Sail.* A light-timber'd wench enough—

Ros. How was she dress'd?

2*d Sail.* Like most of your great ladies, furbelowed out with a deal of spare canvas — Tho' she was but a frigate, she carried sail enough for a first rate.

1*st Sail.* I don't know what they were going to do with her, but she set up her pipes lustily. However, sir, if you wish to see the Captain, I'd advise you to take half a hundred fuzileers with you, and a four and twenty pounder or two, for ——

Ros. Damnation!

1st Sail. He might not chuse to receive gentlemen's visits.

Ros. I thank you, my friends, for your information, I thank you — Take that, and drink Rosano's health. (*Throws down a purse and exit.*)

1st Sail. (*after looking some time at the purse*) Well, shall we fight for it?

2d Sail. Psha! don't remind a man of his follies, take it up.

1st Sail. I think we have done the thing at last; — brought ourselves up with a wet sail; Eh, messmate?

2d Sail. Yes, if we havn't clench'd the nail now, the devil's in it — but what must we do next?

1st Sail. Do? What a lubberly question that is for a couple of sailors who have money. — Here's fun for a fortnight, and tho' it should only last us a week, that's an age for gentlemen of our profession to look forward to: so we'll go and drink Signor Rosano's health. — Ha, ha, ha, I can't help thinking how he'll batter about the old walls.

2d Sail. Yes, and after he has committed a burglary with his four and twenty pounders, to find nobody at home.

1st Sail. And then to pay so handsomely for being imposed on, ha, ha, ha.

2d Sail. Yes, he was determined not to be made a fool of for nothing.

1*st Sail.* And the best of the joke is, that whilst we are drinking his health, he'll be wishing us both at the devil.

2*d Sail.* Well! well! that's the case with a great many people who drink their friends' healths.— Come along. [*Exeunt.*

Scene in DURAZZO'S *Castle.*

The COUNTESS.

AIR 18th.

Delusive hope, once more adieu!
Thy visions of delight,
Melt from my disenchanted view;
I wake, and all is night.
Thou, like the solitary ray,
Which cheers the dying captive's gloom,
Dost glitter only to betray,
And gild the horrors of his tomb.

The storm yet rages loud; yet thou, my soul,
Be still, nor let the terrors of the night—
Hark! 'tis Durazzo's step: protect me, heav'n!

Enter DURAZZO.

Dur. Why dost thou start? Am I so hideous, lady,
That at the sight, thy nature shrinks abhorrent,
As at a church-yard apparition
The village hinds?

Coun. More horrible than that!
Mid the wild uproar of the elements,
Thou comest like the demon of the storm.
Thy look is desolation, and thy touch
A with'ring blast to nature.
Dur. Why I come,
Proud beauty, thou shalt know: but gather this —
I came not to fool time away with words,
I came not to intreat, but to command:—
I did not come to woo thee like the dove,
But like the pard, to grapple and enjoy.
Therefore these looks of scorn are out of season.
'Tis not the fierce displeasure of thine eye;
Thy tone imperious, or thy swelling lip,
Can shake me from my purpose. Mark me, lady!
Revenge may diet on a woman's scorn,
Keenly as love can on her bounty feed.—
Swear, then, to-morrow's sun shall see thee mine,
This moment swear it, or the very next
Shall give to vengeance what is due to love.
Coun. Durazzo, hear me?
Dur. You refuse?
Coun. Nay, hear me! (*Kneels.*)
I do conjure you, as you are a man—
From woman's breasts have drawn humanity—
Have known the blessed sleep that waits on goodness—
Damn not yourself and me.

Dur. Why, thou art woman?
True woman! very woman to the last!
When the loud fury of your words is vain,
You try with tears to soften me to folly:
So, when the fury of the wind subsides,
Relenting nature melts into a shower:
But I am proof to both, and thus I seize,
Cold stubborn fair one—(*As she is struggling with him, the alarm bell of the castle rings, and immediately after one of his crew enters.*)

Sail. Captain, they storm the castle.

Dur. Confusion! who?

Sail. Rosano, and some fifty of his friends.

Coun. Assist them, god of justice!
(*Clasping her hands.*)

Dur. Why, lady, you look pleas'd? rekindling hope
Mounts to your cheek and dances in your eye.
There is some dalliance there for young Rosano,
But I will spoil your dream. Who waits without?
(*Some of his crew enter.*)
Quick thro' the windings of the secret vault,
To the dark tower convey her!
That done, assemble in the court.
(*Exeunt* SAILORS *with the* COUNTESS.)

Dur. (*Solus.*) True, they have traced the lion to his den;
But shall they wrest the victim from my gripe.

Rosano and his friends? What, shall these walls,
That bid defiance to the roaring winds,
And lift their heads to meet the thunderbolt,
Bow to man's mimic battery? Vain fools!
There is a magic in the howling storm,
Which fills my soul with terror, and aught else
Is but the idle prattle of a babe. [*Exit.*

Scene, the Exterior of the Castle.—View of the Tower to which the COUNTESS *has been carried.*

ROSANO *and his Followers enter.*

Ros. This way, my friends; on this side we must enter, or all is lost.

(*The storm continues,* ROSANO *and his Party attack the Castle—A breach is made—*DURAZZO *and his Followers appear and engage the Assailants—*ROSANO *disarms* DURAZZO *and carries off the* COUNTESS.*

Dur. (*Solus.*) Thus is my shame complete, and fix'd his triumph.

* By a judicious transposition, this was made the last scene in *The Fisherman's Hut.*

AIR 19th.

Welcome, once more, thou heaving ocean!
Land of my blighted hopes, adieu!
Soon shall my sails with ling'ring motion
Sink slowly from the landman's view.
Let winds blow hard and billows rave,
The roaring blast, the whelming tide,
My shatter'd vessel may outride,
Led by the star,
That gleams from far,
To light her o'er the pathless wave:
But woman, he
Who trusts to thee,
Shall perish on an unknown sea,
No voice to cheer, no lamp to guide. [*Exit.*

Scene, the COUNTESS's.—*The clothes press is seen at the back part of the stage—The* JUSTICE *steals out from one side towards the one door, and the* JEW *in like manner towards the other, but finding both doors fast, they turn round, and after looking very shy at one another for some time, gradually approach.**

Steph. Ah! what, my friend Balthazar, is it you?

* In the representation, this scene, much compressed, was included in that preceding it, at the Fisherman's Cottage.

Bal. And my dear friend, Signor Stephano, is it you? 'Twas well there was a partition in the clothes press.

Steph. I want nothing but embalming to be a perfect mummy. If they had used me for a threshing floor, and beat out a cart-load of wheat upon me, my bones could not ache more completely.

Bal. I feel as if I had been broke upon the wheel, and was only waiting for the coup de grace.

Steph. Between you and me, I think I cut a very ridiculous figure.

Bal. Between you and me, I think dat ish very much the case with myself.

Steph. But how the devil did you get into that clothes press?

Bal. My dear friend, how did you get there?

Steph. No matter; I believe the less that's said about it the better: but where are we?

Bal. That ish what I should like to know myself.

Steph. We are not brought here for nothing, I'm afraid.

Bal. No, my bones have paid handsomely for the carriage.

Steph. As our disguises can be of no use to us, suppose we cast them off?

Bal. Dat ish a good thought. (*He listens at one*

door, STEPHANO *at the other.*) All is quiet: we'll about it immediately. (*They assist to dress one another.*) Stay, stay, you have forgot my beard.

Steph. True. (*Fixes on the beard.*) There, I think now, whatever the joke may be, we shall spoil it.

Bal. Yesh; but I wish I was out of this house. (*Sound of music without.*) What ish dat? what will become of us?

(*The back Scene opens, and discovers a masquerade.* —BALTHAZAR *and* STEPHANO *endeavour to conceal themselves. Several of the characters, after dancing some time, come forward.*)

Steph. A masquerade? zounds!

1*st Masq.* Hey day! who have we here? Two guests without either masque or domino: how is this, gentlemen? didn't you know you were invited to a masquerade?

Bal. Oh, yesh, I know that, but I did not expect to meet so much company.

2*d Masq.* Psha, they were not invited, depend upon it; they have got in with forg'd tickets; or took advantage of the mob, and have had the impudence to introduce themselves.

Bal. Upon my conscience, I didn't introduce myself.

2d Masq. (*To* STEPHANO.) And you, sir, were you invited by the Countess?

Steph. The Countess! what Countess?

2d Masq. Oh! 'tis clear they are impostors, and we must make an example of them for the good of society.

Steph. Make an example of a judge for the good of society? (*Aside.*) Gentlemen, there is nobody makes more examples for the good of society than I do; and if you will but explain this joke.

1st Masq. Joke! did you ever hear such an impudent fellow? We'll send him to the pump immediately.

Steph. Send a judge to be pump'd on! What will become of me?

2d Masq. And as for his accomplice, this little, dirty, ill-looking dog—

Bal. Aye, dat ish me.

2d Masq. We'll have the pleasure of tossing him in a blanket ourselves. (*They seize* BALTHAZAR.) Faith! he shall caper for it!

Bal. Oh, no—I cannot caper; I never could caper in my life! Do not, I beseech you, toss me in a blanket! for my bones are so jolted, and so shaken, and so batter'd, and so bruis'd, that if you toss me in

a feather bed, I shall fall to pieces like an over-roasted chicken.

1st Masq. Oh! here comes the Countess — she shall determine their punishment.

Enter MARTHA *dressed as the Countess, and masked.*

Mar. For Heaven's sake, what's all this confusion? Why are you laying violent hands on my two excellent friends here? Oh! for shame!

2d Masq. Did your ladyship invite those gentlemen?

Mar. To be sure, I did; and sent my own servants to bring them here. Fye, fye, let them go! Give me leave to apologize, Signors, for the rough treatment of my guests, who were ignorant of your quality. Why, didn't you know this gentleman? This is Signor Stephano, a very upright judge, who, for the love of woman, winks at the iniquity of man, and discovers modes of administering comfort to disconsolate maidens. (*All laugh.*) And this is honest Balthazar, the Jew.

Bal. I vish I vas in Egypt.

Mar. He, too, has a vast kindness for females; but tho' he can, without difficulty, bring his mind to debauch his friend's sister, he is a man of too delicate

a conscience to think of making her his wife! (*A general laugh.* MARTHA *unmasks, and discovers herself, and the* COUNTESS, ROSANO, NICOLINO, &c. *come forward.*)

Bal. Mercy on me!—The Countess!

Steph. The Countess! Then I must congratulate her; though I wish I was fifty miles off! Madam, however whimsical appearances may be, yet give me leave to assure you, that I am so surprised and overjoyed, and overcome, at your unexpected appearance, that I can neither contain nor express myself.

Bal. I must make a speech myself. (*Aside.*) And give me leave to assure your ladyship, that though our appearance here is, as Signor Stephano observes, a little whimsical, yet that I rejoice with sincerity in your safety; and I am so happy to find my friend Nicolino is innocent —

Coun. That you would, no doubt, give your consent to his marrying your daughter, though he had not obtained the reward of a thousand ducats, and I had not made him a promise of adding five hundred more to it.

Bal. Fifteen hundred ducats! (*Aside.*) Well, well; as my friend is innocent, I will give my consent. Now he is rid of his poverty, I know of no fault he has, but his youth.

Coun. That, you know, is one on the right side, which he will always be mending. But a truce to raillery. While I laugh at your follies, let me recollect that I am indebted to you both for my safety; and that, had not the one been his friend, and the other his judge, I should never have owed my deliverance to a poor fisherman — who, being now perfectly cleared before one tribunal, hopes to be honourably acquitted by another.

FINALE.—Chorus.

I.

From the perils we have past,
Fresh delight we borrow;
Joy has still a keener taste,
When it springs from sorrow.

II.

Hope, that dawns from deep despair,
Gives a warmer feeling;
Brighter morning's blushes are,
From night's shadows stealing.

THE END.

Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode,
Printers-Street, London.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018